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في علوم الحديث

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE SCIENCE OF HADITH



Dr. SUHAIB HASAN

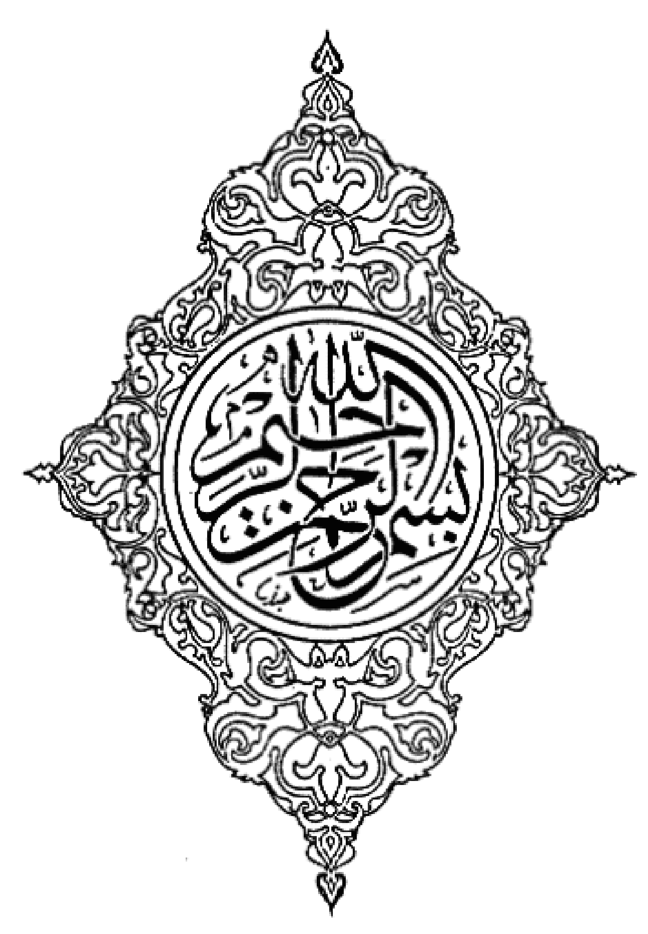


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SUHAIB HASAN

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In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

Contents

Publiser's Note

The Muslims in general believe that the Qur'an has been preserved intact and pure by Allâh Himself. But what is often forgotten by many is that this preservation necessarily includes the *Sunnah* of the Prophet Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم), the practical example of the implementation of the Qur'an.

Hadith is Sunnah in record. How the immense wealth of Hadith literature has been left to us by the *Muhaddiths* (scholars of Hadith) is an extremely wide, complex study.

We publish this short treatise on "the science of Hadith" by the learned Suhaib Hasan with English readers in mind. It is part of our scheme to introduce various aspects of Islam to English readers.

May Allâh accept it as a good work.

Abdul Malik Mujahid
General Manager



FOREWORD

All Praise be to Allâh, Lord of the Worlds. Peace and blessings of Allâh be upon our Prophet Muhammad, and on his family and companions.



We have undoubtedly sent down the Reminder, and We will truly preserve it. (Al-Qur'ân, Surah al-Hijr, 15:9)

The above promise made by Allâh is obviously fulfilled in the undisputed purity of the Qur'anic text throughout the fourteen centuries since its revelation. However, what is often forgotten by many Muslims is that the above divine promise also includes, by necessity, the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم), for it is the practical example of the implementation of the Qur'anic guidance, the Wisdom taught to the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) along with Scripture, and neither the Qur'an nor the Sunnah can be understood correctly without recourse to the other.

Hence, Allâh preserved the Qur'an from being initially lost by the martyrdom of its memorisers, by guiding the Rightly-Guided Caliphs, endorsed by the consensus of the Messenger's Companions (رضي الله عنهم), to compile the *ayat* (signs, miracles, "Verses") of the Qur'an into one volume, after these had been scattered in writing on various materials and in memory amongst many faithful hearts. He safeguarded it from corruption by its enemies: disbelievers, heretics, and false prophets, by enabling millions of believers to commit it to memory with ease. He protected its teachings by causing thousands of people of knowledge to learn from its deep treasures and convey them to the masses, and by sending renewers of His *Deen* at the beginning of every century.

Similarly, Allâh preserved the Sunnah by enabling the Companions and those after them (رضي الله عنهم) to memorise, write down and pass on the statements of the Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) and the descriptions of his Way, as well as to continue the blessings of practising the Sunnah. Later, as the purity of the knowledge of the Sunnah became threatened, Allâh caused the Muslim nation to produce outstanding individuals of incredible memory-skills and analytical expertise, who journeyed tirelessly to collect hundreds of thousands of narrations and distinguish the true words of precious wisdom of their Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم), from those corrupted by weak memories, from forgeries by unscrupulous liars, and from the statements of the enormous number of '*ulama*', the Companions and those who followed their way, who had taught in various centres of learning and helped to transmit the legacy of Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) — all of this achieved through precise attention to the words narrated and detailed familiarity with the biographies of the thousands of reporters of Hadith. Action being the best way to preserve teachings, the renewers of Islam also revived the practice of the blessed authentic Sunnah.

Unfortunately however, statements will continue to be attributed to the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) although the person quoting them may have no idea what the people of knowledge of *Hadith* have ruled regarding those *ahadith*, thus ironically being in danger of contravening the Prophet's widely-narrated stern warnings about attributing incorrect/unsound statements to him. For example, here are some very commonly-quoted *ahadith*, which actually vary tremendously in their degree of authenticity from the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم):

1. "Surah al-Ikhlas is worth a third of the Qur'an."
2. The *hadith* about the Ninety-Nine Names of Allâh.
3. Allâh says, "I was a hidden treasure, and I wished to be known, so I created a creation (mankind), then made Myself known to them, and they recognised Me."

4. Allâh says, "Were it not for you (O Muhammad), I would not have created the universe."
5. When Allâh completed creation, He wrote in a Book (which is) with Him, above His Throne, "Verily, My Mercy will prevail over My Wrath."
6. Allâh says, "Neither My heaven nor My earth can contain Me, but the heart of My believing slave can contain Me."
7. "He who knows himself, knows his Lord."
8. "Where is Allâh?"
9. "Love of one's homeland is part of Faith."
10. "I have left amongst you two things which, if you hold fast to them, you will never stray: the Book of Allâh, and my Sunnah."
11. "I have left among you that which if you abide by, you will never go astray: the Book of Allâh, and my Family, the Members of my House."
12. The *hadith* giving ten Companion, by name, the good tidings of Paradise.
13. "If the *iman* (faith) of Abu Bakr was weighed against the *iman* of all the people of the earth, the former would outweigh the latter."
14. "I am the City of Knowledge, and 'Ali is its Gage."
15. "My companions are like the stars: whichever of them you follow, you will be guided."
16. "The differing amongst my Ummah is a mercy."
17. "My Ummah will split up into seventy-three sects: seventy-two will be in the Fire, and one in the Garden."
18. Prophecies about the coming of the *Mahdi* (the guided one), *Dajjal* (the False Christ, the Anit-Christ) and the return of Jesus Christ son of Mary.
19. Description of punishment and bliss in the grave, for the wicked and pious people respectively.
20. Intercession by the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم), and the believers seeing Allâh, on the Day of Judgement.
21. "Pradise is under the feet of mothers."
22. "Paradise is under the shade of swords."

23. "Seeking knowledge is a duty upon every Muslim."
24. "Seek knowledge, even if you have to go to China."
25. "The ink of the scholar is holier than the blood of the martyr."
26. "We have returned from the lesser *Jihad* to the greater *Jihad* (i.e., the struggle against the evil of one's soul)."

The methodology of the expert scholars of Hadith in assessing such narrations and sorting out the genuine from the mistaken/fabricated etc., forms the subject-matter of a wealth of material left to us by the *muhaddithun* (scholars of Hadith, "traditionists"). This short treatise is a humble effort to introduce this exteremely wide subject to English readers. The author has derived great benefit from the outstanding scholarly work in this field, *Muqaddimah Ibn al-Salah.*

A brief explanation of the verdicts from the experts in this field on the above *ahadith* is given in the Appendix.

We ask Allâh to accept this work, and make it beneficial to its readers.

....

SECTION A

INTRODUCTION

The Muslims are agreed that the *Sunnah* of the Prophet Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) is the second of the two revealed fundamental sources of Islam, after the Glorious Qur'an. The authentic Sunnah is contained within the vast body of Hadith literature.[1]

A *hadith* (pl. *ahadith*) is composed of two parts: the *matn* (text) and the *isnad* (chain of reporters). A text may seem to be logical and reasonalbe but it needs an authentic isnad with reliable reporters to be acceptable; 'Abdullah bin Al-Mubarak (d. 181 AH), one of the illustrious teachers of Imam al-Bukhari, said,

الإسناد من الدين ، ولو الإسناد لقال من شاء ما شاء

"The *isnad* is part of the religion: had it not been for the *isnad*, whoever wished to would have said whatever he liked."[2]

During the lifetime of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) and after his death, his Companions (*Sahabah*) used to refer to him directly, when quoting his saying. The Successors (*Tabi'un*) followed suit; some of them used to quote the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) through the Companions while others would omit the intermediate authority — such a *hadith* was .later known as *mursal*. It was found that the missing link between the Successor and the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) might be one person, i.e. a Companion, or two people, the extra person being an older Successor who heard the *hadith* from the Companion. This is an example of how the need for the verification of each isnad arose. Imam Malik (d. 179) said, "The first one to utilise the *isnad* was

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[1] Ar. *Sunnah*: Way. Path. Tradition. Example. See *An Introduction to the Sunnah* by Suhaib Hasan (Understanding Islam Series no. 5. published by Al-Quran Society). for Qur'anic proofs of revelation besides the Qur'an. the importance of the Sunnah. and a brief history of the collections of Hadith. See also Imam al-Shafi's *al-Risalah* for the authoritative position of the Sunnah (Engl. Trans.. pp. 109-116).

[2] Related by Imam Muslim in the Introduction to his *Sahih* - see *Sahih Muslim* (ed. M.F. 'Abdul Baqi. 5 vols.. Cairo. 1374/1955). 1:15 & *Sahih Muslim bi Sharah an-Nawawi* (18 vols. In 6. Cairo. 1349). 1:87. The existing English translation of *Sahih Muslim*. by Abdul Hamid Siddiqi. does not contain this extremely valuable Introduction.

Ibn Shihab al Zuhri" (d. 124).[3] The other more important reason was the deliberate fabrication of ahadith by various sects which appeared amongst the Muslims, in order to support their views (see later, under discussion of *maudu'* ahadith). Ibn Sirin (d. 110), a Successor, said, "They would not ask about the *isnad*. But when the *fitnah* (trouble, turmoil, esp. civil war) happened, they said: Name to us your men. So the narrations of the *Ahl al-Sunnah* (Adherents to the Sunnah) would be accepted, while those of the *Ahl al-Bid'ah* (Adherents to Innovation) would not be accepted."[4]

A brief history of *Mustalah al-Hadith*

As time passed, more reports were involved in each isnad, and so the situation demanded strict discipline in the acceptance of ahadith; the rules regulating this discipline are known as *Mustalah al-hadith* (the Classification of Hadith).

Amongst the early traditionists (*muhaddithin*, scholars of Hadith), the rules and criteria governing their study of Hadith were meticulous but some of their terminology varied from person to person, and their principles began to be systematically written down, but scattered amongst various books, e.g. in *Al-Risalah* of al-Shafi'I (d. 204), the Introduction to the *Sahih* of Muslim (d. 261) and the *Jami'* of al-Tirmidhi (d. 279); many of the criteria of early traditionists, e.g. al-Bukhari, were deduced by later scholars from a careful study of which reporters or isnads were accepted and rejected by them.

One of the earliest writings to attempt to cover *Mustalah* comprehensively, using standard (i.e. generally-accepted) terminology, was the work by al-Ramahurmuzi (d. 360). The next major contribution was *Ma'rifah 'Ulum al-Hadith* by al-Hakim (d. 405), which covered fifty classifications of Hadith, but

[3] Ibn Abi Hatim al-Razi, *Al-Jarh wal-Ta'dil* (8 vols., Hyderabad, 1360-1373), 1:20.
[4] *Sahih Muslim*, 1:15. See Suhaib Hasan, *Criticism of Hadith among Muslims with reference to Sunan Ibn Maja* (Ta Ha publishers/Al-Quran Society, London, 1407/1986), pp. 15-17 for discussion of this statement of Ibn Sirin.

still left some points untouched; Abu Nu'aim al-Isbahani (d. 430) completed some of the missing parts to this work. After that came *Al-Kifayah fi 'Iim al-Riwayah* of al-Khatib al-Baghdadi (d. 463) and another work on the manner of teaching and studying Hadith; later scholars were considered to be greatly indebted to al-Khatib's work.

After further contributions by Qadi 'Iyad al-Yahsubi (d. 544) and Abu Hafs al-Mayanji (d. 580) among others, came the work which, although modest in size, was so comprehensive in its excellent treatment of the subject that it came to be the standard reference for thousands of scholars and students of Hadith to come, over many centuries until the present day: *'Ulum al-Hadith* of Abu 'Amr 'Uthman Ibn al-Salah (d. 643), commonly known as *Muqaddimah Ibn al-Salah*, compiled while he taught in the *Dar al-Hadith* of several cities in Syria. Some of the numerous later works based on that of Ibn al-Salah are:

- An abridgement of *Muqaddimah, Al-Irshad* by al-Nawawi (d. 676), which he later summarised in his *Taqrib*; al-Suyuti (d. 911) compiled a valuable commentary on the latter entitled *Tadrib al-Rawi*.
- *Ikhtisar 'Ulum al-Hadith* of Ibn Kathir (d. 774), *Al-Khulashah* of al-Tibi (d. 743), *Al-Minhal* of Badr al-Din bin Jama'ah (d. 733), *Al-Muqni'* of Ibn al-Mulaqqin (d. 802) and *Mahasin al-Istilah* of al-Balqini (d. 805), all of which are abridgements of *Muqaddimah Ibn al-Salah*.
- *Al-Nukat* of al-Zarkashi (d. 794), *Al-Taqyid wa 'l-Idah* of a al-'Iraqi (d. 806) and *Al-Nukat* of Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani (d. 852), all of which are further notes on the points made by Ibn al-Salah.
- *Alfiyyah al-Hadith* of al-'Iraqi, a rewriting of *Muqaddimah* in the form of a lengthy poem, which became the subject of several commentaries, including two (one long, one short) by the author himself, *fath al-Mughith* of al-Sakhawi (d. 903),

Qatar al-Durar of al-Suyuti and *Fath al-Baqi* of Shaykh Zakariyyah al-Ansari (d. 928).

Others notable treatises on *Mustalah* include:

- *Al-Iqtirah* of Ibn Daqiq al-'Id (d. 702).
- *Tanqih al-Anzar* of Muhammad bin Ibrahim al-Wazir (d. 840), the subject of a commentary by al-Amir al-San'asni (d. 1182).
- *Nukhbah al-Fikr* of Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani, again the subject of several commentaries, including one by the author himself, one by his son Muhammad, and those of 'Ali al-Qari (d. 1014), 'Abd la-Ra'uaf al-Munawi (d. 1031) and Muhammad bin 'Abd al-Hadi al-Sindi (d. 1138). Among those who rephrased the *Nukhbah* in poetic form are al-Tufi (d. 893) and al-Amir al-San'ani.
- *Alfiyyah al-Hadith* of al-Suyuti, the most comprehensive poetic work in the field.
- *Al-Manzumah* of al-Baiquni, which was expanded upon by, amongst others, al-Zurqani (d. 1122) and Nawab Siddiq Hasan Khan (d. 1307).
- *Qawa'id al-Aahdith* of Jamal al-Din al-Qasimi (d. 1332).
- *Taujih al-Nazar* of Tahir al-Jaza'iri (d. 1338), a summary of al-Hakim's *Ma'rifah*.

Mustalah al-Hadith

Mustalah books speak of a number of classes of hadith in accordance with their status. The following broad classifications can be made, each of which is explained in the later sections:

- **According to the reference to a particular authority**, e.g. the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم), a Companion, or a Successor, such

ahadith are called *marfu'* (elevated), *mauquf* (stopped) and *maqtu'* (severed) respectively.

- **According to the links in the isnad**, i.e. whether the chain of reporters is interrupted or uninterrupted, e.g. *musnad* (supported), *muttasil* (continuous), *munaqti'* (broken), *Mu'allaq* (hanging), *mu'dal* (perplexing) and *mursal* (hurried).

- **According to the number of reporters involved in each stage of the isnad**, e.g. *mutawatir* (consecutive) and *ahad* (isolated), the latter being divided into *gharib* (scarce, strange), *'aziz* (rare, strong), and *mashhur* (famous).

- **According to the manner in which the hadith has been reported**, such as using the words *'an* (عن -"on the authority of"), *haddathana* (حدثنا - "he narrated to us"), *akhbarana* (اخبرنا - "he informed us") or *sami'tu* (سمعت- "I heard"). In this category falls the discussion about *mudallas* (concealed) and *musalsal* (uniformly-linked) *ahadith.*

[Note: In the quotation of isnads in the remainder of this book, the first mode of narration mentioned above will be represented with a single broken line thus: ..... The three remaining modes of narration mentioned above, which all strongly indicate a clear, direct transmission of the hadith, are represented by a double line thus:= = =.]

- **According to the nature of the matn and isnad**, e.g. an addition by a reliable reporter, known as *ziyadatu thiqah*, or opposition by a lesser authority to a more reliable one, known as *shadhdh* (irregular). In some cases, a text containing a vulgar expression, unreasonable remark or obviously-erroneous statement is rejected by the traditionists outright without consideration of the isnad: such a hadith is known as *munkar* (denounced). If an expression or statement is proved to be an addition by a reporter to the text, it is declared as *mudraj* (interpolated).

- **According to a hidden defect found in the isnad or text of a hadith**. Although this could be included in some of the previous categories, a *hadith mu'allal* (defective hadith) is worthy to be explained separately. The defect can be caused in many ways; e.g. two types of *hadith mu'allal* are known as *maqlub* (overturned) and *mudtraib* (shaky).
- **According to the reliability and memory of the reporters**; the final judgement on a hadith depends crucially on this factor: verdicts such as *sahih* (sound), *hasan* (good), *da'if* (weak) and *maudu'* (fabricated, forged) rest mainly upon the nature of the reporters in the isnad.

Rijal al-Hadith

Mustalah al-Hadith is strongly associated with *Rijal al-hadith* (the study of the reporters of hadith). In scrutinising the reporters of a hadith, authenticating or disparaging remarks made by recognised experts, from amongst the Successors and those after them, were found to be of great help. Examples of such remarks, in descending order of authentication, are:

- "Imam (leader), *Hafiz* (preserver)."
- "Reliable, trustworthy."
- "Makes mistakes."
- "Weak."
- "Abandoned (by the traditionists)."
- "Liar, used to fabricate ahadith."[5]

Reporters who have been unanimously described by statements such as the first two may contribute to a *sahih* ("sound", see later) isnad. An isnad containing a reporter who is described by the last two statements is likely to be *da'if jiddan* (very weak) or *maudu'* (fabricated). Reporters who are the subject of statements

[5] Remarks like these are exceptions from the basic Islamic prohibition of backbiting (*ghibah*) another Muslim, even if the statement is true. Such exceptions are allowed, even obligatory in some cases, where general benefit to the Muslim public is at stake, such as knowing which ahadith are authentic. See e.g. *Riyad al-Salihin* of al-Nawawi, Chapter on Backbiting, for the justification for certain types of backbiting from the Qur'an and Sunnah.

such as the middle two above will cause the isnad to be *da'if* (weak), although several of them relating the same hadith independently will often increase the rank of the hadith to the level of *hasan* (good). If the remarks about a particular reporter conflict, a careful verdict has to be arrived at after in-depth analysis of e.g. the reason given for any disparagement, the weight of each type of criticism, the relative strictness or leniency of each critic, etc.

The earliest remarks cited in the books of *Rijal* go back to a host of Successors, followed by those after them until the period of the six canonical traditionists, a period covering the first three centuries of Islam. A list of such names is provided by the author in his thesis, *Criticism of Hadith among Muslims with reference to Sunan Ibn Majah*, at the end of chapters IV,V and VI.

Among the earliest available works in this field are *Tarikh* of Ibn *Ma'in* (d. 233), *Tabaqat* of Khalifa bin Khayyat (d. 240), *Tarikh* of al-Bukhari (d. 256), *Kitab al-Jarh wa'l-Ta'dil* of Ibn Abi Hatim (d. 327) and *Tabaqat* of Muhammad bin Sa'd (d. 320).

A number of traditionists made efforts specifically for the gathering of information about the reporters of the five famous collections of hadith, those of al-Bukhari (d. 256), Muslim (d. 261), Abu Dawud (d. 275), al-Tirmidhi (d. 279) and al-Nasa'i (d. 303), giving authenticating and disparaging remarks in detail. The first major such work to include also the reporters of Ibn Majah (d. 273) is the ten-volume collection of al-Hafiz 'Abd al-Ghani al-Maqdisi (d. 600), known as *Al-Kamal fi Asma' al-Rijal*. Later, Jamal al-Din Abu 'l-Hajjaj Yusuf bin 'Abd al-Rahman al-Mizzi (d. 742) prepared an edited and abridged version of this work, punctuated by places and countries of origin of the reporters; he named it *Tahdhib al-Kamal fi Asma' al-Rijal* and produced it in twelve volumes. Further, one of al-Mizzi's gifted pupils, Shams al-Din Abu 'Abdullah Muhammad bin Ahmad bin 'Uthman bin Qa'imaz al-Dhahabi (d. 748), summarised his shaikh's work and produced two abridgements: a longer one

called *Tadhhib al-Tahdhib* and a shorter one called *Al-Kashif fi Asma' Rijal al-Kutub al-Sittah.*

A similar effort with the work of al-Mizzi was made by Ibn Hajar (d. 852), who prepared a lengthy but abridged version, with about one-third of the original omitted, entitled *Tahdhib al-Tahdhib* in twelve shorter volumes. Later, he abridged this further to a relatively-humble two-volume work called *Taqrib al-Tahdhib.*

The work of al-Dhahabi was not left unedited; al-Khazraji (Safi al-Din Ahmad bin 'Abdullah, (d. after 923) summarised it and also made valuable additions, producing his *Khulasah.*

A number of similar works deal with either trustworthy reporters only, e.g. *Kitab al-Thiqat* by al-'Ijli (d. 261) and *Tadhkirah al-Huffaz* by al-Dhahabi, or with disparaged authorities only, e.g. *Kitab al-Du'afa' wa al-Matrukin* by al-Nasa'i and *Kitab al-Majruhin* by Muhammad bin Hibban al-Busti (d. 354).

Two more works in this field which include a large number of reporters, both authenticated and disparaged, are *Mizan al-I'tidal* of al-Dhahabi and *Lisan al-Mizan* of Ibn Hajar.

SECTION B

THE CLASSIFICATION OF HADITH

1) ACCORDING TO THE REFERENCE TO A PARTICULAR AUTHORITY

The following principal types of hadith are important:

Marfu' (مرفوع) - "elevated": A narration from the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم), e.g. a reporter (whether a Companion, Successor or other) says, "The Messenger of Allâh said..." For example, the very first hadith in *Sahih al-Bukhari* is as follows: *Al-Bukhari = = = Al-Humaidi 'Abdullah bin al-Zubair = = = Sufyan = = = Yahaya bin Sa'id al-Ansari = = = Muhammad bin Ibrahim al-Taymi = = = 'Alqamah bin Waqqas al-Laithi, who said: I heard 'Umar bin al-Khattab saying, while on the pulpit, "I heard Allâh's Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) saying: The reward of deeds depends on the intentions, and every person will get the reward according to what he has intended; so whoever emigrated for wordly benefits or for a woman to marry, his emigration was for what he migrated."*

Mauquf (موقوف)- "sotpped": A narration from a Companion only, i.e. his own statement; e.g. al-Bukhari reports in his *Sahih*, in *Kitab al-Fara'id* (Book of the Laws of Inheritance), that Abu Bakr, Ibn 'Abbas and Ibn al-Zubair said, "The grandfather is (treated like) a father."

It should be noted that certain expressions used by a Companion generally render a hadith to be considered as being effectively *marfu'* although it is *mauquf* on the face of it, e.g. the following:

- "We were commanded to..."
- "We were forbidden from..."
- "We used to do..."
- "We used to say/do ... while the Messenger of Allâh was amongst us."
- "We did not use to mind such-and-such..."
- "It used to be said..."
- "It is from the Sunnah to..."

- "It was revealed in the following circumstances:...", speaking about a verse of the Qur'an.

Maqtu' (مقطوع) - "severed": A narration from a Successor, e.g. Muslim reports in the Introduction to his *Sahih* that Ibn Sirin (d. 110) said, "This knowledge (i.e. Hadith) is the Religion, so be careful from whom you take your religion."

The authenticity of each of the above three types of hadith depends on other factors such as the reliability of its reporters, the nature of the linkage amongst them, etc. However, the above classification is exteremely useful, since through it the sayings of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) can be distinguished at once from those of Companions or Successors; this is especially helpful in debate about matters of *Fiqh*.

Imam Malik's *Al-Muwatta'*, one of the early collections of hadith, contains a relatively even ratio of these types of hadith, as well as *mursal* ahadith (which are discussed later). According to Abu Bakr al-Ashari (d. 375), *Al-Muwatta'* contains the following:

600 *marfu'* ahadith,
613 *mauquf* ahadith,
285 *maqtu'* ahadith, and
28 *mursal* ahadith; a total of 1726 ahadith.[6]

Among other collections, relatively more *mauquf* and *maqtu'* ahadith are found in *Al-Musannaf* of Ibn Abi Shaibah (d. 235), *Al-Musannaf* of 'Abd al-Razzaq (d. 211) and the *Tafsirs* of Ibn Jarir (d. 310), Ibn Abi Hatim (d. 327) and Ibn al-Mundhir (d. 319).[7]

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[6] Muhammad Adib Salih, *Lamahat fi Usul al-Hadith* (2nd ed., al-Maktab al-Islami, Beirut. 1389). p. 143.

[7] Tahir bin Ahmad al-Jaza'iri, *Taujih al-Nazar ila Usul al-Nazar* (Maktaba 'Ilmiyyah, Madinah, N.D.). P. 68.

2) ACCORDING TO THE LINKS IN THE ISNAD

Musnad: (مسند)

Al-Hakim defines a *musnad* ("supported") hadith as follows:

> "A hadith which a traditionist reports from his shaikh from whom he is known to have heard (ahadith) at a time of life suitable for learning, and similarly in turn for each shaikh, until the isnad reaches a well-known Companion, who in turn reports from the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم)."[8]

By this definition, an ordinary *muttasil* hadith (i.e. one with an uninterrupted isnad) is excluded if it goes back only to a Companion or Successor, as is a *marfu'* hadith which has an interrupted isnad.

Al-Hakim gives the following example of a *musnad* hadith:

We reported from Abu 'Amr 'Uthman bin Ahmad al-Sammak al-Baghdadi === Al-Hassan bin Mukarram === 'Uthman bin 'Amr === Yunus --- al-Zuhri--- 'Abdullah bin Ka'b bin Malik --- his father, who asked Ibn Abi Hadrad for payment of a debt he owed to him, in the mosque. During the ensuing argument, their voices were raised until heard by the Messenger of Allâh (صلى الله عليه وسلم), who eventually lifted the curtain of his apartment and said, "O Ka'b! Write off a part of your debt" — he meant remission of half of it. So he agreed, and the man paid him.

He then remarks:

> "Now, my hearing from Ibn al-Simak is well-known, as is his from Ibn Mukarram; al-Hasan's link with 'Uthman bin 'Amr and the latter's with Yunus bin Zaid are known as well; Yunus is always remembered with al-Zuhri, and the latter with the sons of Ka'b bin Malik, whose link to their father and his companionship of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) are well-established."[9]

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[8] Muhammad bin 'Abdullah al-Hakim, Ma'rifah 'Ulum al-Hadith (ed. Mu'azzam Hussain, Cairo, 1937), p. 17.
[9] Ibid.

The term *musnad* is also applied to those collections of ahadith which give the ahadith of each Companion separately. Among the early compilers of such a *Musnad* were Yahya bin 'Abd al-Hamid al-Himmani (d. 228) at Kufah and Musaddad bin Musarhad (d. 228) at Basrah. The largest existing collection of ahadith of Companions arranged in this manner is that of Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal (d. 241), which contains around thirty thousand ahadith. Another larger work is attributed to the famous Andalusian traditionist Baqi bin Makhlad al-Qurtubi 9d. 276), but unfortunately it is now untraceable.

Mursal (مرسل), *Munqati'* (منقطع), *Mu'dal* (معضل) & *Mu'allaq* (معلق)

If the link between the Successor and the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) is missing, the hadith is *mursal* ("hurried"), e.g. when a Successor says, "The Prophet said…".

However, if a link anywhere before the Successor (i.e. closer to the traditionist recording the hadith) is missing, the hadith is *munqati'* ("broken"). This applies even if there is an apparent link, e.g. an isnad seems to be *muttasil* ("continuous") but one of the reporters is known to have never heard ahadith from his immediate authority, even though he may be his contemporary. The term *munqati'* is also applied by some scholars to a narration such as where a reporter says, "a man narrated to me…", without naming this authority.[10]

If the number of consecutive missing reporters in the isnad exceeds one, the isnad is *mu'dal* ("perplexing"). If the reporter omits the whole isnad and quotes the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) directly (i.e. the link is missing at the beginning unlike the case with a *mursal* isnad), the hadith is called *mu'allaq* ("hanging") — sometimes it is known as *balaghah* ("to reach"); for example, Imam Malik sometimes says in *Al-Muwatta'*, "It reached me that the Messenger of Allâh (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said…".

Example of a *munqati'* hadith

Al-Hakim reported from Muhammad bin Mus'ab === al-Auza'i --- Shaddad Abu 'Ammar --- Umm al-Fadl bint al-Harith, who

[10] Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti, Tadrib al-Rawi (ed. A.A. Latif. Ist ed., Cairo. 1379/1959). 1:197.

said: I came to the Messenger of Allâh (صلى الله عليه وسلم) and said, "I have seen in a vision last night as if a part of your body was cut out and placed in my lap." He said, "You have seen something good. Allâh willing, Fatimah will give birth to a lad who will be in your lap." After that, Fatimah gave birth to al-Husain, who used to be in my lap, in accordance with the statement of the Messenger of Allâh (صلى الله عليه وسلم). One day, I came to the Messenger of Allâh (صلى الله عليه وسلم) and placed al-Husain in his lap. I noticed that both his eyes were shedding tears. He said, "Jibril came to me and told me that my *Ummah* will kill this son of mine, and he brought me some of the reddish dust of that place (where he will be killed)".

Al-Hakim said, "This is a *sahih* hadith according to the conditions of the Two Shaykhs (i.e. Bukhari & Muslim), but they did not collect it." Al-Dhahabi sayd, "No, the hadith is *munqati*' and da'if, because Shaddad never met Umm al-Fadl and Muhammad bin Mus'ab is weak."[11]

Example of a *mu'dal* hadith

Ibn Abi Hatim === Ja'far bin Ahmad bin al-Hakam Al-Qurashi in the year 254 === Sulaiman bin Mansur bin 'Ammar === 'Ali bin 'Asim --- Sa'id --- Qatadah --- Ubayy bin Ka'b, who reported that the Messenger of Allâh (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said, "After Adam had tasted from the tree, he ran away, but the tree caught his hair. It was proclaimed: O Adam! Are you running away from Me? He said: No, but I feel ashamed before You. He said: O Adam! Go away from My neighbourhood, for by My Honour, no-one who disobeys Me can live here near Me; even if I were to create people like you numbering enough to fill the earth and they were to disobey Me, I would make them live in a home of sinners."

Ibn Kathir remarks, "This is a *gharib* hadith. There is *inqita'*, in fact *I'dal*, between Qatadah and Ubay bin Ka'b, (رضي الله عنهم)."[12]

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[11] Al-Dhahabi, *Talkhis al-Mustadrak* (printed with *Mustadrak al-Hakim*, 4 vols., Hyderabad), 3:176.

[12] Abu 'l-Fida' 'Imad al-Din Ibn Kathir, *Tafsir al-Qur'an al -Azim* (4 vols., Cairo, N.D.) 1:80.

Authenticity of the *Mursal* Hadith

There has been a great deal of discussion amongst the scholars regarding the authenticity of the *Mursal* Hadith (pl. *Marsil*), since it is quite probable that a Successor might have omitted two names, those of an elder Successor and a Companion, rather than just one name, that of a Companion.

If the Successor is known to have omitted the name of a Companion only, then the hadith is held to be authentic, for a Successor can only report from the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) through a Companion; the omission of the name of the Companion does not affect the authenticity of the isnad since all Compnaions are held to be trustworthy and reliable, by both Qur'anic injunctions and sayings of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم).

However, opinions vary in the case where the Successor might have omitted the names of two authorities (since not all the Successors were reliable in matters of Hadith). For example, two widely-differing positions on this issue are:

(i) the *Marasil* of elder Successors such as Sa'id bin al-Musayyab (d. 94) and 'Ata' bin Abi Rabah (d. 114) are acceptable because all their *Marasil*, after investigation, are found to come through the Companions only. However, the *Marasil* of younger Successors are only acceptable if the names of their immediate authorities are known through other sources; if not, they are rejected outright.

(ii) the *Marsil* of Successors and those who report from them are acceptable without any investigation at all. This opinion is supported by the Kufi school of traditionists, but is severely attacked by the majority.

To be precise in this issue, let us investigate in detail the various opinions regarding the *Mursal* Hadith:

1- The opinion held by **Imam Malik** and all Maliki jurists is that the *Mursal* of a trustworthy person is valid as proof and as justification for a practice, just like a *musnad* hadith. [13] This view

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[13] Yusuf bin 'Abdullah Ibn 'Abdul Barr, *Tajrid al-Tamhid lima fi l-Muwatta' min al-Asanid* (Cairo, 1350), 1:2.

has been developed to such an extreme that to some of them, the *mursal* is even better than the *musnad*, based on the following reasoning:

> "the one who reports a *musnad* hadith leaves you with the names of the reporters of further investigation and scrutiny, whereas the one who narrates by way of *Irsal*, being a knowledgeable and trustworthy person himself, has already done so and found the hadith to be sound. In fact, he saves you from further research."[14]

2 - Imam Abu Hanifah (d. 150) holds the same opinion as Malik; he accepts the *Mursal* Hadith whether or not it is supported by another hadith. [15]

3 - Imam al-Shafi'I (d. 204) has discussed this issue in detail in his *al-Risalah*; he requires the following conditions to be met before accepting a *mursal* hadith:

a) In the narrative, he requires that one of the following conditions be met:

- that it be reported also as *musnad* through another isnad;
- that its contents be reported as *mursal* through another reliable source with a different isnad;
- that the meaning be supported by the sayings of some Companions; *or*
- that most scholars hold the same opinion as conveyed by the *mursal* hadith.

b) Regarding the narrator, he requires that one of the following conditions be met:

- that he be an elder Successor;
- that if he names the person missing in the isnad elsewhere, he does not usually name and unknown person or someone not suitable for reporting from acceptably; *or*

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[14] Ibid.
[15] al-Suyuti, 1:198

that he does not contradict a reliable person when he happens to share with him in a narration.[16]

On the basis of these arguments, al-Shafi'I accepts the *Irsal* of Sa'id bin al-Musayyab, one of the elder Successors. For example, al-Shafi'I considers the issue of selling meat in exchange for a living animal: he says that Malik told him, reporting from Zaid bin Aslam, who reported from Ibn al-Musayyab that the Messenger of Allâh (صلى الله عليه وسلم) forbade the selling of meat in exchange for an animal. He then says, "This is our opinion, for the *Irsal* of Ibn al-Musayyib is fine."[17]

4 - Imam Amad bin Hanbal (d. 241) accepts *mursal* and (other) *da'if* (weak) ahadith if nothing opposing them is found regarding a particular issue, preferring them to *qiyas* (analogical deduction). By *Da'if* here is meant ahadith which are not severely weak, e.g. *batil*, *munkar*, or *maudu'*, since Imam Ahmad classified ahadith into *sahih* and *da'if* rather than into *sahih*, *hasan* and *da'if*, the preference of most later traditionists. Hence, the category *da'if* in his view applied to ahadith which were relatively close to being *sahih*, and included many ahadith which were classed as *hasan* by other scholars.[18] Overlooking this fact has caused misunderstanding about Imam Ahmad's view on the place of *da'if* ahadith in rulings of *Fiqh* and in matters of *Fada'il al-A'mal* (virtues of various acts of worship).

5 - Ibn Hazm (d. 456) rejects the *Mursal* Hadith outright; he says that the *Mursal* is unacceptable, whether it comes through Sa'id bin al-Musayyib or al-Hasan al-Basri. To him, even the *Mursal* which comes through someone who was not well-known to be amongst the Companions would be unacceptable.[19]

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[16] For the discussion in detail, see al-Shafi'I, *al-Risalah* (ed. Ahmad Shakir, Cairo, 1358/1940, pp. 461-470; English translation: M. Khadduri, 2nd ed., Islamic Texts Society, Cambridge, 1987, pp. 279-284, where the *mursal hadith* has been translated as "interrupted tradition").

[17] Al-Suyuti, 1:199; Muhammad bin Mustafa al-Ghadamsi, *Al-Mursal min al-Hadith* (Darif Ltd., London, N.D.) p.71.

[18] Ibn al-Qayyim, I'lam *al-Muwaqqi'in* (2nd ed., 4 vols. in 2, Dar al-Fikr, Bdirut, 1397/1977), 1:31.

[19] Ibn Hazm, *Al-Ihkam fi Usul al-Ahkam* (Matba'ah al-Sa'adah, Cairo, 1345), 2:135.

6 - Abu Dawud (d. 275) accepts the *Mursal* under two conditions:

- that no *musnad* hadith is found regarding that issue; or
- that if a *musnad* hadith is found, it is not contradicted by the *mursal* hadith.[20]

7 - Ibn Abi Hatim (d. 327) does not give a specific opinion about the *Mursal* Hadith. However, he did collect an anthology of 469 reporters of hadith, including four female reporters, whose narratives were subjected to criticism due to *Irsal*. This collection is known as *Kitab al-Marasil*.

8 - Al-Hakim (d. 405) is extremely reluctant to accept the *Mursal* Hadith except in the case of elder Successors. He holds, on the basis of the Qur'an, that knowledge is based on what is heard (directly), not on what is reported (indirectly). In this regard, he quotes Yazid bin Harun who asked Hammad bin Laith:

"O Abu Isma'il! Did Allâh mention the *Ahl al-Hadith* (scholars of Hadith) in the Qur'an?" He replied, "Yes! Did you not hear the saying of Allâh,

﴿ ۞ وَمَا كَانَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ لِيَنفِرُوا۟ كَآفَّةً ۚ فَلَوْلَا نَفَرَ مِن كُلِّ فِرْقَةٍ مِّنْهُمْ طَآئِفَةٌ
لِّيَتَفَقَّهُوا۟ فِى ٱلدِّينِ وَلِيُنذِرُوا۟ قَوْمَهُمْ إِذَا رَجَعُوٓا۟ إِلَيْهِمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَحْذَرُونَ ﴾

If a party from every expedition remained behind, they[21] *could devote themselves to studies in religion and admonish the people when they return to them, that thus they may guard themselves (against evil)'. (Qur'an, 9:122)*

"This concerns those who set off to seek knowledge, and then return to those who remained behind in order to teach them."[22]

Al-Hakim then remarks, "This verse shows that the acceptable knowledge is the one which is being heard, not just received by way of Irsal."[23]

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[20] Al-Hazimi, *Shurut al-A'immah al-Khamsah* (ed. M.Z., al-Kauthari, Cairo, N.D.), p.45.

[21] According to the different interpretations of this vers, "they" here could refer to those who stay behind, or those who go forth.

[22] Al-Hakim, p. 26.

[23] Ibid.

9 - Al-Khatib al-Baghdadi (d. 462) strongly supports the view of those who reject the *Mursal* except if it comes through an elder Successor. He concludes, after giving a perusal of different opinions about this issue,

> "What we select out of these sayings is that the *Mursal* is not to be practised, nor is it acceptable as proof. We say that *Irsal* leads to one reporter being ambiguous; if he is ambiguous, to ascertain his reliability is impossible. We have already explained that a narration is only acceptable if it comes through a reporter known for reliability. Hence, the *Mursal* should not be accepted at all.[24]

Al-Khatib gives the following example, showing that a narrative which has been reported through both *musnad* and *mursal* isnads is acceptable, not because of the reliability of those who narrated it by way of *Irsal* but because of an uninterrupted isnad, even though it contains less reliable reporters:

The text of the hadith is: "*No marriage is valid except by the consent of the guardian*"; al-Khatib gives two isnads going back to Shu'bah and Sufyan al-Thauri; the remainder of each isnad is:

Sufyan al-Thauri and Shu'bah --- Abu Ishaq --- Abu Burdah --- the Prophet.

This isnad is *mursal* because Abu Burdah, a Successor, narrates directly from the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم). However, al-Khatib further gives three isnads going back to Yunus bin Abi Ishaq, Isra'il bin Yunus and Qais bin al-Rabi'; the remainder of the first isnad is:

Yunus bin Abi Ishaq --- Abu Ishaq --- Abu Burdah --- Abu Musa --- the Prophet.

The other two reporters narrate similarly, both of them including the name of Abu Musa, the Companion from whom Abu Burdah has reported. Al-Khatib goes on to prove that both al-Thauri and

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[24] Al-Khatib al-Baghdadi, *Al-Kifayah fi 'Ilm al-Riwayah* (Hyderabad, 1357), p. 387.

Shu'bah heard this hadith from Abu Ishaq in one sitting while the other three reporters heard it in different sittings. Hence, this addition of Abu Musa in the isnad is quite acceptable.[25]

10 - **Ibn al-Salah** (d. 643) agrees with al-Shafi'i in rejecting the *Mursal* Hadith unless it is proved to have come through a *musnad* route.[26]

11 - **Ibn Taimiyyah** (d. 728) classifies *Mursal* into three categories. He says, "There are some acceptable, others unacceptable, and some which require further investigation:

- if it is known that the reporter does so (i.e. narrates by *Irsal*) from reliable authorities, then his report will be accepted;
- if he does so from both classess of authorities, i.e. reliable and unreliable, we shall not accept his narration (on its own, without further investigation), for he is narrating from someone whose reliability is unknown;
- all such *mursal* ahadith which go against the reports made by reliable authorities will be rejected completely."[27]

12 - **Al-Dhahabi** (d. 748) regards the *Mursal* of younger Successors such as al-Hasan al-Basri, al-Zuhri, Qatadah and Humaid al-Tawil as the weakest type of *Mursal.*[28]

Later scholars such as **Ibn Kathir** (d. 744), **al-'Iraqi** (d. 806), **Ibn Hajar** (d. 852), **al-Suyuti** (d. 911), **Muhammad bin Ibrahim al-Wazir** (d. 840), **Jamal al-Din al-Qasimi** (d. 1332), and **Tahir al-Jaza'iri** (d. 1338) have given exhaustive discussions about this issue, but none of them holds an opinion different to those mentioned above.

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[25] Ibid., pp. 411-413.

[26] Zain al-Din al-'Iraqi, *Al-Taqyid wa 'l-Iddah Sharh Muqaddimah Ibn al-Salah* (al-Maktabah al-Salafiyyahh, Madinah, 1389/1969), p.72

[27] Ibn Taymiyyah, *Minhaj al-Sunnah an-Nabawiyyah fi Naqd Kalam al-Shi'ah wa 'l-Qydariyyah* (al-Maktabah al-Amiriyyah, Bulaq, 1322), 4:117.

[28] Al-Dhahabi, *Al-Muqizah* (Maktab al-Matbu'at al-Islamiyyah, Halab, 1405),p.40.

3) ACCORDING TO THE NUMBER OF REPORTERS INVOLVED IN EACH STAGE OF THE ISNAD

Mutawatir (متواتر) & *Ahad* (آحاد)

Depending on the number of the reporters of the hadith in each stage of the isnad, i.e. in each generation of reporters, it can be classified into the general categories of *mutawatir* ("consecutive") or *ahad* ("single") hadith.

A *mutawatir* hadith is one which is reported by such a large number of people that they cannot be expected to agree upon a lie, all of them together.[29]

Al-Ghazali (d. 505) stipulates that a *mutawatir* narration be known by the sizeable number of its reporters equllay in the beginning, in the middle and at the end.[30] He is correct in this stipulation because some narrations or ideas, although known as *mutawatir* among some people, whether Muslims or non-Muslims, originally have no *tawatur*. There is no precise definition for a "large number of reporters"; although the numbers four, five, seven, ten, twelve, forty and seventy, among others, have all been variously suggested as a minimum, the exact number is irrelevant (some reporters, e.g. Imams of Hadith, carry more weight anyway than others who are their contemporaries): the important condition is that the possibility of coincidence or "organised falsehood" be obviously negligible.[31]

Examples of *mutawatir* practices are the five daily prayers, fasting, zakat, the Hajj and recitation of the Qur'an. Among the verbal *mutawatir* ahadith, the following has been reported by at least sixty-two Companions from the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم), and has been widely-known amongst the Muslims throughout the ages:

من كذب علي متعمدا فليتبوأ مقعده من النار

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[29] al-Jaza'iri, p. 33.

[30] Ibid.

[31] Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani, *Sharh Nukhbah al-Fikr* (ed. M. 'Aud & M.G. Sabbagh, Damascus, 1410/1990), pp. 8-9.

"Whoever invents a lie and attributes it to me intentionally, let him prepare his seat in the Fire."

Ahadith related to the description of the *Haud Kauthar* (the Basin of Abundant Goodness) in the Hereafter, raising the hands at certain postures during prayer, rubbing wet hands on the leather socks during ablution, revelation of the Qur'an in seven modes, and the prohibition of every intoxicant are further examples of verbal *mutawatir* ahadith.[32]

A *hadith ahad* or *khabar wahid* is one which is narrated by people whose number does not reach that of the *mutawatir* case. *Ahad* is further classified into:

Gharib (غريب), 'Aziz (عزيز) & Mashhur (مشهور)

A hadith is termed *gharib* ("scarce, strange") when a only a single reporter is found relating it at some stage of the isnad. For example, the saying of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم),

السفر قطعة من العذاب

"*Travel is a piece of punishment*" is *gharib*; the isnad of this hadith contains only one reporter in each stage: Malik --- Yahya bin Abi Salih --- Abu Hurairah --- the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم). With regard to its isnad, this hadith is *sahih*, although most *gharib* ahadith are weak; Ahmad bin Hanbal said, "Do not write these *gharib* ahadith because they are unacceptable and most of them are weak."[33]

A type of hadith similar to *gharib* is *fard* ("solitary"); it is known in three ways:

a. similar to *gharib*, i.e.a single person is found reporting it from a well-known Imam;

b. the people of one locality are known to narrate the hadith;

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[32] Al-Jaza'iri, p. 49; Muhammad bin Isma'il al-Amir al-San'ani, *Taudih al-Afkar* (2 vols. ed. M.M. 'Abdul Hamid, Cairo, 1366), 2:405.

[33] al-San'ani, 2:409.

c. narrators from one locality report the hadith from narrators of another locality, such as the people of Makkah reporting from the people of Madinah.[34]

If at any stage in the isnad, only two reporters are found to narrate the hadith, it is termed *'aziz* ("rare, strong"). For example, Anas reported that the Messenger of Allâh (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said,

لا يؤمن أحدكم حتى أكون أحب إليه من والده وولده والناس أجمعين

"None of you (truly) believes until I become more beloved to him than his father, his son, and all the people."

Two reporters, Qatadah and 'Abdul 'Aziz bin Shu'aib, report this hadith from Anas, and two more reporters narrate from each of them: Shu'bah and Sa'id report from Qatada, and Isma'il bin Ulayyah and 'Abd al-Warith from 'Abd al-'Aziz; then a group of people report from each of them.[35]

A hadith which is reported by more than two reporters is known as *mashhur* ("famous"). According to some scholars, every narrative which comes to be known widely, whether or not it has an authentic origin, is called *mashhur*. A *mashhur* hadith might be reported by only one or two reporters in the beginning but become widely-known later, unlike *gharib* or *'aziz*, which are reported by one or two reporters in the beginning and continue to have the same number even in the times of the Successors and those after them. For example, if only one or two reporters are found narrating hadith from a reliable authority in Hadith such as al-Zuhir and Qatadah, the hadith will remain either *gharib* or *'aziz*. On the other hand, if a group of people narrate from them, it will be known as *mushhur*.[36]

According to al-'Ala'I (Abu Sa'id Khalil Salah al-Din, d. 761), a hadith may be known as *'aziz* and *mashhur* at the same time. By this he means a hadith which is left with only two reporters in its

[34] al-Hakim, pp. 96-102.
[35] al-San'ani, 2:455.
[36] al-'Iraqi, p. 268.

isnad at any stage while it enjoys a host of reporters in other stages, such as the saying of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم),

نحن الآخرون السابقون يوم القيامة

"We are the last but (will be) the foremost on the Day of Resurrection."

This hadith is *'aziz* in its first stage, as it is reported by Hudhaifah bin al-Yaman and Abu Hurairah only. It later becomes *mashhur* as seven people report it from Abu Hurairah.[37]

4) ACCORDING TO THE MANNER IN WHICH THE HADITH IS REPORTED

Mudallas (مدلس) hadith & Tadlis

Different ways of reporting, e.g. حدثنا (he narrated to us), أخبرنا (he informed us), سمعت (I heard), and عن (on the authority of) are used by the reporters of hadith. The first three indicate that the reporter personally heard from his shaikh, whereas the mode عن can denote either hearing in person or through another reporter.

A *mudallas* ("concealed") hadith is one which is weak due to the uncertainty casued by *tadlis. Tadlis* (concealing) refers to an isnad where a reporter has concealed the identity of his shaikh. Ibn al-Salah describes two types of *tadlis*:

a) *tadlis al-isnad*. A person reports from his shaikh whom he met, what he did not hear from him, or from a contemporary of his whom he did not meet, in such a way as to create the impression that he heard the hadith in person. A *mudallis* (one who practises *tadlis*) here usually uses the mode عن ("on the authority of") or قال ("he said") to conceal the truth about the isnad.

b) *tadlis al-shuyukh*. The reporter does mention his shaikh by name, but uses a less well-known name, nickname etc., in order not to disclose his shaikh's identity.[38]

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[37] al-San'ani, 2:406.
[38] al-'Iraqi, p. 96

Al-'Iraqi (d. 806), in his notes on *Muqaddimah Ibn al-Salah*, adds a third type of *tadlis*:

c) ***tadlis al-taswiyyah***. To explain it, let us assume an isnad which contains a trustworthy shaikh reporting from a weak authority, who in turn reports from another trustworthy shaikh. Now, the reporter of this isnad omits the intermediate weak authority, leaving it apparently consisting of reliable authorities. He plainly shows that he heard it from his shaikh but he uses the mode "*on the authority of*" to link his immediate shaikh with the next trustworthy one. To an average student, this isnad seems free of any doubt or discrepancy. This is known to have been practised by Baqiyyah bin al-Walid, Walid bin Muslim, al-A'mash and al-Thauri. It is said to be the worst among the three kinds of *tadlis*.[39]

Ibn Hajar classifies those who practised *tadlis* into five categories in his essay *Tabaqat al-Mudallisin*:

- Those who are known to do it occasionally, such as Yahya bin Sa'id al-Ansari.
- Those who are accepted by the traditionists, either because of their good reputation and relatively few cases of *tadlis*, e.g. Sufyan al-Thauri (d. 161), or because they reported from authentic authorities only, e.g. Sufyan Ibn 'Uyainah (d. 198).
- Those who practised it a great deal, and the traditionists have accepted such ahadith from them which were reported with a clear mention of hearing directly. Among these are Abu 'l-Zubair al-Makki, whose ahadith narrated from the Companion Jabir bin 'Abdullah have been collected in *Sahih Muslim*. Opinions differ regarding whether they are acceptable or not.
- Similar to the previous category, but the traditionists agree that their ahadith are to be rejected unless they clearly admit

[39] ibid.

of their hearing, such as by saying "*I heard*"; an example of this category is Baqiyyah bin al-Walid.

- Those who are disparaged due to another reason apart from *tadlis*; their ahadith are rejected, even though they admit of hearing them directly. Exempted from them are reporters such as Ibn Lahi'ah, the famous Egyptian judge, whose weakness is found to be of a lesser degree. Ibn Hajar gives the names of 152 such reporters.[40]

Tadlis, especially of those in the last three categories, is so disliked that Shu'bah (d. 170) said, "*Tadlis* is the brother of lying" and "To commit adultery is more favourable to me than to report by way of *Tadlis*."[41]

***Musalsal* (مسلسل)**

A *musalsal* (uniformly-linked) isnad is one in which all the reporters, as well as the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم), use the same mode of transmission such as *'an*, *haddathana*, etc., repeat any other additional statement or remark, or act in a particular manner while narrating the hadith.

Al-Hakim gives eight examples of such isnads, each having a different characteristic repeated feature:

- use of the phrase *sami'tu* (I heard);
- the expression "stand and pour water for me so that I may illustrate the way my shaikh performed ablution".
- *haddathana* (he narrated to us);
- *amarani* (he commanded me);
- holding one's beard;
- illustrating by counting on five fingers;
- the expression "I testify that ..."; and
- interlocking the fingers.[42]

Knowledge of *musalsal* helps in discouting the possibility of *tadlis*.

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[40] Ibn Hajar, *Tabaqat al-Mudallisin* (Cairo, 1322). P. 7f.
[41] al-'Iraqi, p. 98
[42] al-Hakim, pp. 30-34

5) ACCORDING TO THE NATURE OF THE TEXT AND ISNAD

Shadhdh (شاذ) & _Munkar_ (منكر)

According to al-Shafi'i, a *shadhdh* ("irregular") hadith is one which is reported by a trustworthy person but goes against the narration of a person more reliable than him. It does not include a hadith which is unique in its contents and is not narrated by someone else.[43] In the light of this definition, the well-known hadith,

إنما الأعمال بالنيات

"Actions are (judged) according to their intentions", is not considered *shadhdh* since it has been narrated by Yahya bin Sa'id al-Ansari from Muhammad bin Ibrahim al-Taimi form 'Alqamah from 'Umar, all of whom are trustworthy authorities, although each one of them is the only reporter at that stage.[44]

An example of a *shadhdh* hadith according to some scholars is one which Abu Dawud and al-Tirmidhi transmit, through the following isnad:

> 'Abdul Wahid bin Ziyad --- al-A'mash --- Abu Salih --- Abu Hurairah === the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم): "*When one of you offers the two rak'ahs before the Dawn Prayer, he should lie down on his right side.*"

Regarding it, al-Baihaqi said,

> " 'Abdul Wahid has gone against a large number of people with this narration, for they have reported the above as an act of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم), and not as his saying; Abdul Wahid is alone amongst the trustworthy students of al-A'mash in narrating these words."[45]

According to Ibn Hajar, if a narration which goes against another authentic hadith is reported by a weak narrator, it is known as *munkar* (denounced).[46] Traditionists as late as Ahmad used to

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[43] ibid., p. 119
[44] Ibn Kathir, *Ikhtisar 'Ulum al-Hadith* (ed. Ahmad Shakir, 2nd imp., Cairo, 1951), p. 57.
[45] al-Suyuti, 1:235; M.A. Salih, p. 260.
[46] Al-San'ani, 2:3

simply label any hadith of a weak reporter as *munkar*.[47] Sometimes, a hadith is labelled as *munkar* because of its contents being contrary to general sayings of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم). Al-Khatib (d. 463) quotes al-Rabi' bin Khaitham (d. 63) as saying,

> "Some ahadith have a light like that of day, which we recognise; others have a darkness like that of night which makes us reject them."

He also quotes al-Auza'I (d. 157) as saying,

> "We used to listen to ahadith and present them to fellow traditionists, just as we present forged coins to money-changers: whatever they recognise of them, we accept, and whatever they reject of them, we also reject."[48]

Ibn Kathir quotes the following two ahadith in his *Tafsir*, the first of which is acceptable, whereas the second contradicts it and is unreliable:

> **1-** Ahmad === Abu Mu'awiyah === Hisham bin 'Urwah --- Fatimah bint al-Mundhir --- Asma' bint Abi Bakr, who said, "My mother came (to Madinah) during the treaty Quraish had made, while she was still a polytheist. So I came to the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) and said to him, 'O Messenger of Allâh, my mother has come willingly: should I treat her with kindness?" He replied, 'Yes! Treat her with kindness'."

> **2-** Al-Bazzar === 'Abdullah bin Shabib === Abu Bakr bin Abi Shaibah === Abu Qatadah al-'Adawi --- the nephew of al-Zuhri --- 'Urwah --- 'A'ishah and Asma', both of whom said, "Our mother came to us in Madinah while she was a polytheist, during the peace treaty between the Quraish and the Messenger of Allâh (صلى الله عليه وسلم). So we said, 'O Messenger of Allâh, our mother has come to Madinah willingly: do we treat her kindly?" He said, 'Yes! Treat her kindly'."

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[47] ibid., 2:6
[48] al-Khatib, p. 431.

Ibn Kathir then remarks:

> "This (latter) hadith, to our knowledge is reported only through this route of al-Zuhri --- 'Urwah --- 'A'ishah. It is a *munkar* hadith with this text because the mother of 'A'ishah is Umm Ruman, who was already a Muslim emigrant, while the mother of Asma' was another woman, as mentioned by name in other ahadith."[49]

In contrast to a *munkar* hadith, if a reliable reporter is found to add something which is not narrated by other authentic sources, the addition is accepted as long as it does not contradict them; and is known as *ziyadatu thiqah* (an addition by one trustworthy).[50] An example is the hadith of al-Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Ibn Mas'ud: "I asked the Messenger of Allâh (صلى الله عليه وسلم), 'Which action is the most virtuous?" He said, "The Prayer at its due time'." Two reporters, Al-Hasan bin Makdam and Bindar, reported it with the addition, "... at the beginning of its time"; both Al-Hakim and Ibn Hibban declared this addition to be *sahih*.[51]

Mudraj (مدرج)

An addition by a reporter to the text of the saying being narrated is termed *mudraj* (interpolated).[52] For example, al-Khatib relates via Abu Qattan and Shababah --- Shu'bah --- Muhammad bin Ziyad --- Abu Hurairah --- The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم), who said,

إسبغوا الوضوء ، ويل للأعقاب من النار

"Perform the ablution fully; woe to the heels from the Fire!"

Al-Khatib then remarks,

> "The statement, 'Perform the ablution fully' is made by Abu Hurairah, while the statement afterwards, 'Woe to the heels from the Fire!' is that of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم). The

[49] Ibn Kathir, *Tafsir*, 4:349.
[50] Ibn Kathir, *Ikhtisar*, p. 62
[51] al-Suyuti, 1:248.
[52] al-Hakim, p. 39

distinction between the two is understood from the narration of al-Bukhari, who transmits the same hadith and quotes Abu Hurairah as saying, "Complete the ablution, for Abu 'l-Qasim (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said: Woe to the heels from the Fire!."[53]

Such an addition may be found in the beginning, in the middle, or at the end, often in explanation of a term used. *Idraj* (interpolation) is mostly found in the text, although a few examples show that such additions are found in the isnad as well, where the reporter grafts a part of one isnad into another.

A reporter found to be in the habit of intentional *idraj* is generally unacceptable and considered a liar.[54] However, the traditionists are more lenient towards those reporters who may do so forgetfully or in order to explain a difficult word.

6) ACCORDING TO A HIDDEN DEFECT FOUND IN THE ISNAD OR TEXT OF A HADITH.

Before discussing *ma'lul* (defective) ahadith, a brief note on *mudtarib* (shaky) and *maqlub* (reversed) ahadith would help in understanding *ma'lul.*

Mudtarib (مضطرب)

According to Ibn Kathir, if reporters disagree about a particular shaikh, or about some other points in the isnad or the text, in such a way that none of the opinions can be preferred over the others, and thus there is uncertainty about the isnad or text, such a hadith is called *mudtarib* (shaky).[55]

For example with regard to *idtirab* in the isnad, it is reported on the authority of Abu Bakr that he said, "O Messenger of Allâh! I see you getting older?" He (صلى الله عليه وسلم) replied, "What made me old are Surah Hud and its sister surahs." Al-Daraqutni says,

[53] al-'Iraqi, p. 129f.
[54] al-Suyuti, 1:274.
[55] Ibn Kathir, *Ikhtisar*, p. 72.

"This is an example of a *mudtarib* hadith. It is reported through Abu Ishaq, but as many as ten different opinions are held about this isnad: some report it as *mursal*, others as *muttasil*; some take it as *musnad* of Abu Bakr, others as *musnad* of Sa'd or 'A'ishah. Since all these reports are comparable in weight, it is difficult to prefer one above another. Hence, the hadith is termed as *mudtarib*."[56]

As an example of *idtirb* in the text, Rafi' bin Khadij said the Messenger of Allâh (صلى الله عليه وسلم) forbade the renting of land. The reporters narrating from Rafi' give different statements, as follows:

1. Hanzalah asked Rafi', "What about renting for gold and silver?" He replied, "It does not matter if it is rent for gold and silver."

2. Rifaah --- Rafi' --- the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم), who said, "Whoever owns a piece of land should cultivate it, give it to his brother to cultivate, or abandon it."

3. Salim --- Rafi' --- his two uncles --- the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم), who forbade the renting of farming land.

4. The son of Rafi' --- Rafi' --- the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم), who forbade the renting of land.

5. A different narration by Rafi' from the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم), who said, "Whoever owns a piece of land should either cultivate it or give it to his brother to cultivate. He must not rent it for a third or a quarter of the produce, nor for a given quantity of the produce."

6. Zaid bin Thabit said, "May Allâh forgive Rafi'! I am more aware of the hadith than he; what happened was that two of the *Ansar* (Helpers) had a dispute, so they came to the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم), who said after listening to their cases, "If this is your position, then do not rent the farms.' Rafi' has only heard the last phrase, i.e., 'Do not rent the farms'."

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[56] Ibid.

Because of these various versions, Ahmad bin Hanbal said,

> "The ahadith reported by Rafi' about the renting of land are *mudtarib*. They are not to be accepted, especially when they go against the well-established hadith of Ibn 'Umar that the Messenger of Allâh (صلى الله عليه وسلم) gave the land of Khaibar to the Jews on condition that they work on it and take half of the produce."[57]

Maqlub (مقلوب)

A hadith is known as *maqlub* (changed, reversed) when its isnad is grafted to a different text or vice versa, or if reporter happens to reverse the order of a sentence in the text.

As an example relating to the text, in his transmission of the famous hadith describing the seven who will be under the shelter of Allâh on the Day of Judgement, Muslim reports one of the categories as, "*a man who conceals his act of charity to such an extent that his right hand does not know what his left hand gives in charity.*" This sentence has clearly been reversed by a reporter, because the correct wording is recorded in other narrations of both al-Bukhari and Muslim as follows: "*... that his left hand does not know what his right hand gives...*"[58]

The famous trial of al-Bukhari by the scholars of Baghdad provides a good example of a *maqlub* isnad. The traditionists, in order to test their visitor, al-Bukhari, appointed ten men, each with ten ahadith. Now, each hadith (text) of these ten people was prefixed with the isnad of another. Imam al-Bukhari listened to each of the ten men as they narrated their ahadith and denied the correctness of every hadith. When they had finished narrating these ahadith, he addressed each person in turn and recounted to

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[57] Ibn 'Abdul Barr, *Al-Tamhid*, 3:32, as quoted by Luqman al-Salafi, *Ihtimam al-Muhaddithin bi Naqd al-Hadith*, p. 381f.

[58] Ibn Kathir, *Ikhtisar*, p. 88.

him each of his ahadith with its correct isnad. This trial earned him great honour among the scholars of Baghdad.[59]

Other ways in which ahadith have been rendered *maqlub* are by replacement of the name of a reporter with another, e.g. quoting Abu Hurairah as the reporter from the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) although the actual reporter was someone else, or by reversal of the name of the reporter, e.g. mentioning Walid bin Muslim instead of Muslim bin Walid, or Ka'b bin Murrah instead of Murrah bin Ka'b.[60]

***Ma'lul or Mu'allal* (معلول ، معلل)**

Ibn al-Salah says, "A *ma'lul* (defective) hadith is one which appears to be sound, but through research reveals a disparaging factor." Such factors can be:

1. declaring a hadith *musnad* when it is in fact *mursal*, or *marfu'* when it is in fact *mauquf*;
2. showing a reporter to narrate from his shaikh when in fact he did not meet the latter; or attributing a hadith to one Companion when it in fact comes through another.[61]

Ibn al-Madini (d. 324) says that such a defect can only be revealed if all the isnads of a particular hadith are collated. In his book *al-'Iial*, he gives thirty-four Successors and the names of those Companions from whom each of them heard ahadith directly. For example, he says that al-Hasan al-Basri (d. 110, aged 88) did not see 'Ali (d. 40), althoug he adds that there is a slight possibility that he may have seen him during his childhood in Madinah.[62] Such information is very important, since for

[59] Ibid., p. 87.

[60] Shams al-Din Muhammad bin 'Abd al-Rahman al-Sakhawi, *Fath al-Mughith Sharh Alfiyyah al-Hadith li 'l-'Iraqi* (Lucknow, N.D.), 1:278.

[61] 'Uthman bin 'Abd al-Rahman al-Dimashqi Ibn al-Salah, '*Ulum al-Hadith* (commonly known as Muqaddimah, ed. Al-Tabbakh, Halab, 1350), p.116.

[62] 'Ali bin 'Abdullah bin Ja'far Ibn al-Madini, *Kitab al-'Iial*, p. 58. Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani mentions that the Imams of Hadith have agreed that al-Hasan al-Basri did not hear a single word from 'Ali.

example, many Sufi traditions go back to al-Hasan al-Basri, who is claimed to report directly from 'Ali.

Being a very delicate branch of *Mustalah al-Hadith*, only a few well-known traditionists such as Ibn al-Madini (d. 234), Ibn Abi Hatim al-Razi (d. 327), al-Khalal (d. 311) and al-Daraqutni (d. 385), have compiled books about it. Ibn Abi Hatim, in his *Kitab al-'Iial*, has given 2840 examples of *ma'lul* ahadith about a range of topics.

An example of a *ma'lul* hadith is one transmitted by Muslim on the authority of Abu Hurairah, who reports the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) as saying,

> "Allâh created the land on Saturday; He created the mountains on Sunday; He created the trees on Monday; He created the things entailing labour on Tuesday; He created the light (or fish) on Wednesday; He scattered the beasts in it (the earth) on Thursday; and He created Adam after the afternoon of Friday, the last creation at the last hour of the hours of Friday, between the afternoon and night."[63]

Regarding it, Ibn Taimiyyah says,

> "Men more knowledgeable than Muslim, such as al-Bukhari and Yahya bin Ma'in, have criticised it. Al-Bukhari said, 'This saying is not that of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم), but one of Ka'b al-Ahbar'."[64]

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[63] *Sahih Muslim*, 4:2149 (English transl., IV:1462, *Sharh Nawawi*, 17:133).

[64] Ibn Tamiyyah, *Majmu' Fatawa* (37 vols., ed. 'Abd al-Rahman bin Qasim & his son Muhamad, Riyad, 1398), 18:18f. Ibn Taimiyyah mentions that Imam Muslim's authentication of this hadith is supported by Abu Bakr al-Anbari & Ibn al-Jauzi, whereas al-Baihaqi supports those who disparaged it. Al-Albani says that it was Ibn al-Madini who criticised it, whereas Ibn Ma'in did not (the latter was known to be very strict, both of them were shaikhs of al-Bukhari). He further says that the hadith is *sahih*, and does not contradict the Qur'an, contrary to the probable view of the scholars who criticised the hadith, since what is mentioned in the Qur'an is the creation of the heavens and the earth in six days, each of which may be like a thousand years, whereas the hadith refers to the creation of the earth only, in days which are shorter than those referred to in the Qur'an (*Silsilah al-Ahadith as-Sahihah*, no. 1833).

7) ACCORDING TO THE RELIABILITY AND MEMORY OF THE REPORTERS

The final verdict on a hadith, i.e. *sahih* (sound), *hasan* (good), *da'if* (weak) or *maudu'* (fabricated, forged), depends critically on this factor.

Among the early traditionists, mostly of the first two centuries, ahadith were classified into two categories only: *sahih* and *da'if*; al-Tirmidhi was to be the first to distinguish *hasan* from *da'if*. This is why traditionists and jurists such as Ahmad, who seemed to argue on the basis of *da'if* ahadith sometimes, were in fact basing their argument on the ahadith which were later to be known as *hasan*.[65]

We now examine in more detail these four important classes of ahadith.

Sahih (صحيح)

Al-Shafi'I states the following requirement in order for a hadith which is not *mutawatir* to be acceptable:

> "Each reporter should be trustworthy in his religion; he should be known to be truthful in his narrating, to understand what he narrates, to know how a different expression can alter the meaning, and report the wording of the hadith verbatim, not only its meaning. This is because if he does not know how a different expression can change the whole meaning, he will not know if he has changed what is lawful into what is prohibited. Hence, if he reports the hadith according to its wording, no change of meaning will be found at all. Moreover, he should be a good memoriser if he happens to report from his memory, or a good preserver of his writings if he happens to report from them. He should agree with the narrations of the *huffaz* (leading authorities in Hadith), if he reports something

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[65] Al-Dhahabi, p. 27.

which they do also. He should not be a *mudallis*, who narrates from someone he met something he did not hear, nor should he report from the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) contrary to what reliable sources have reported from him. In addition, the one who is above him (in the isnad) should be of the same quality, [and so on,] until the hadith goes back uninterrupted to the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) or any authority below him."[66]

Ibn al-Salah, however, defines a *sahih* hadith more precisely by saying:

"A *sahih* hadith is the one which has a continuous isnad, made up of reporters of trustworthy memory from similar authorities, and which is found to be free from any irregularities (i.e. in the text) or defects (i.e. in the isnad)."

By the above definition, no room is left for any weak hadith, whether, for example, it is *munqati, mu'dal, mudtarib, maqlub, shadhdh, munkar, ma'lul,* or contains a *mudallis*. The definition also excludes *hasan* ahadith, as will be discussed under that heading.

Of all the collectors of hadith, al-Bukhari and Muslim were greatly admired because of their tireless attempts to collect *sahih* ahadith only. It is generally understood that the more trustworthy and of good memory the reporters, the more authentic the hadith. The isnad: al-Shafi'i --- Malik --- Nafi' --- 'Abdullah bin 'Umar --- The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم), is called a "golden isnad" because of its renowned reporters.[67]

Some traditionists prefer *Sahih al-Bukhari* to *Sahih Muslim* because al-Bukhari always looked for those reporters who had either accompanied or met each other, even if only once in their lifetime. On the other hand, Muslim would accept a reporter who

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[66] Al-Shafi'i, p. 370f (Eng. trans., pp. 239-240).
[67] Al-Dhahabi, p. 24.

is simply found to be contemporary to his immediate authority in reporting.[68]

The following grading is given for *sahih* ahadith only:

1. those which are transmitted by both al-Bukhari and Muslim;
2. those which are transmitted by al-Bukhari only;
3. those which are transmitted by Muslim only;
   those which are not found in the above two collections, but
4. which agree with the requirements of both al-Bukhari and Muslim;
5. which agree with the requirements of al-Bukhari only;
6. which agree with the requirements of Muslim only; and
7. those declared *sahih* by other traditionists.[69]

***Hasan* (حسن)**

Al-Tirmidhi means by hadith hasan: a hadith which is not *shadhdh*, nor contains a disparaged reporter in its isnad, and which is reported through more than one route of narration.[70]

Al-Khattabi (d. 388) states a very concise definition, "It is the one where its source is known and its reporters are unambiguous."

By this he means that the reporters of the hadith should not be of a doubtful nature, such as with the *mursal* or *munqati'* hadith, or one containing a *mudallis*.

Ibn al-Salah classifies *hasan* into two categories:

1. one with an isnad containing a reporter who is *mastur* ("screened", i.e. no prominent person reported from him) but is not careless in his reporting, provided that a similar text is reported through another isnad as well;

2. one with an isnad containing a reporter who is known to be truthful and reliable, but is a degree less in his

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68 al-Nawawi, *Muqaddimah*, p. 14.

69 al-Tibi, al-Husain bin 'Abdullah, *al-Khulasha fi Usul al-Hadith* (ed. Subhi al-Samarra'i, Baghdad, 1391), p. 36.

70 Ibid., p. 38.

preservation/memory of hadith in comparison to the reporters of *sahih* ahadith.

In both categories, Ibn al-Salah requires that the hadith be free of any *shudhudh* (irregularities).[71]

Al-Dhahabi, after giving the various definitions, says. " A *hasan* hadith is one which excels the *da'if* but nevertheless does not reach the standard of a *sahih* hadith.[72] In the light of this definition, the following isnads are *hasan* according to al-Dhahabi:

1. Bahz bin Hakam --- his father --- his grandfather;
2. 'Amr bin Shu'aib--- his father --- his grandfather;
3. Muhammad bin 'Amr --- Abu Salamah --- Abu Hurairah.

Reporters such as al-Harith bin 'Abdullah, 'Asim bin Damurah, Hajjaj bin Artat, Khusaif bin 'Abd al-Rahman and Darraj Abu al-Samh attract different verdicts: some traditionists declare their ahadith *hasan*, others declare them *da'if*.[73]

Example of a *hasan* hadith

Malik, Abu Dawud, al-Tirmidhi and al-Hakim reported through their isnads from 'Amr bin Shu'aib --- his father --- his grandfather, that the Messenger of Allâh (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said,

الراكب شيطان ، والراكبان شيطانان ، والثلاثة ركب

"*A single rider is a devil* (i.e. disobedient), *two riders are two devils, but three makes a travelling party.*"

Al-Tirmidhi declares this hadith to be *hasan* because of the above isnad, which falls short of the requirements for a *sahih* hadith.[74]

Several weak ahadith may mutually support each other to the level of *hasan*

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71 al-Nawawi, *Muqaddimah*, p. 43.
72 al-Dhahabi, p. 26
73 ibid., pp. 32-33.
74 al-Albani, *Silsilah al-Ahadith al-Sahihah*, *no. 62.*

According to the difinitions of al-Tirmidhi and Ibn al-Salah, a number of similar weak ahadith on a particular issue can be raised to the degree of *hasan* if the weakness found in their reporters is of a mild nature. Such a hadith is known as *hasan li ghairihi* (*hasan* due to others), to distinguish it from the type previously-discussed, which is *hasan li dhatihi* (*hasan* in itself). Similary, several *hasan* ahadith on the same subject may make the hadith *sahih li ghairihi*, to be distinguished from the previously-discussed *sahih li dhatihi.*

However, in case the weakness is severe (e.g., the reporter is accused of lying or the hadith is itself *shadhdh*), such very weak ahadith will not support each other and will remain weak. For example, the well-known hadith,

من حفظ على أمتي أربعين حديثا بعثه الله يوم القيامة في زمرة الفقهاء

"*He who preserves forty ahadith for my Ummah will be raised by Allâh on the Day of Resurrection among the men of understanding*", has been declared to be *da'if* by most of the traditionists, although it is reported through several routes.[75]

Da'if (ضعيف)

A hadith which fails to reach the status of *hasan* is *da'if*. Usually, the weakness is one of discontinuity in the isnad, in which case the hadith could be *mursal*, *mu'allaq*, *mudallas*, *munqati'* or *mu'dal*, according to the precise nature of the discontinuity, or one of a reporter having a disparaged character, such as due to his telling lies, excessive mistakes, opposition to the narration of more reliable sources, involmement in innovation, or ambiguity surrounding his person.

The smaller the number and importance of defects, the less severe the weakness. The more the defects in number and severity, the closer the hadith will be to being *maudu'*(fabricated).[76]

Some ahadith, according to the variation in the nature of the weakness associated with its reporters, rank at the bottom of the

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[75] al-Jaza'iri, p. 149.
[76] al-Sakhawi, 1::99.

hasan grade or at the top of the *da'if* grade. Reporters such as 'Abdullah bin Lahi'ah (a famous judge from Egypt), 'Abd al-Rahman bin Zaid bin Aslam, Abu Bakr bin Abi Maryam al-Himsi, Faraj bin Fadalah, and Rishdin bin Sa'd attract such types of varying ranks as they are neither extremely good preservers nor totally abandoned by the traditionsts.[77]

Maudu' (موضوع)

Al-Dhahabi defines *maudu'*(fabricated, forged) as the term applied to a hadith, the text of which goes against the established norms of the Prophet's sayings, or its reporters include a liar, e.g. the forty ahadith known as *Wad'aniyyah* or the small collection of ahadith which was fabricated and claimed to have been reported by 'Ali al-Rida, the eighth Imam of the *Ithna 'Ashari* Shi'ah.[78]

A number of traditionists have collected fabricated ahadith separately in order to distinguish them from other ahadith; among them are Ibn al-Jauzi in *al-Maudu'at*, al-Jauzaqani in *Kitab al-Abatil*, al-Suyuti in *al-La'ali al-Masnu'ah fi 'l-Ahadith al-Maudu'ah*, and 'Ali al-Qari in *al-Maudu'*at.

Some of these ahadith were known to be spurious by the confession of their inventors. For example, Muhammad bin Sa'id al-Maslub used to say, "It is not wrong to fabricate an isnad for a sound statement."[79] Another notorious inventor, 'Abd al-Karim Abu 'l-Auja, who was killed and crucified by Muhammad bin Sulaiman bin 'Ali, governor of Basrah, admitted that he had fabricated four thousand ahadith declaring lawful the prohibited and vice-versa.[80]

Maudu' ahadith are also recognised by external evidence related to a discrepancy found in the dates or times of a particular incident.[81] For example, when the second caliph, 'Umar bin al-Khattab decided to expel the Jews from Khaibar, some Jewish

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[77] al-Dhahabi, pp. 33-34.
[78] Ibid., p. 36.
[79] Al-Sakhawi, 1:264.
[80] Ibid., 1:275
[81] al-Nawawi, *Taqrib*, 1:275.

dignitaries brought a document to 'Umar apparently proving that the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) had intended that they stay there by exempting them from the *jizyah* (tax on non-Muslims under the rule of Muslims); the document carried the witness of two Companions, Sa'd bin Mu'adh and Mu'awiyah bin Abi Sufyan. 'Umar rejected the document outright, knowing that it was fabricated because the conquest of Khaibar took place in 6 AH, whereas Sa'd bin Mu'adh died in 3 AH just after the Battle of the Trench, and Mu'awiyah embraced Islam in 8 AH, after the conquest of Makkah![82]

The author, in his *Criticism of Hadith among Muslims with reference to Sunan Ibn Majah*, has given more examples of fabricated ahadith under the following eight categories of causes of fabrication:[83]

1. political differences;
2. factions based on issues of creed;
3. fabrications by *zanadiqah* (enemies-within spreading heretical beliefs);
4. fabrications by story-tellers;
5. fabrications by ignorant ascetics;
6. prejudice in favour of town, race or a particular *imam*;
7. inventions for personal motives;
8. proverbs turned into ahadith.

Similar to the last category above is the case of *Isra'iliyat* ("Israelite traditions"), narrations from the Jews and the Christians [84] which were wrongly attributed to the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم).

[82] See Ibn al-Qayyim, *al-Manar al-Munif fi 'l-Sahih wa 'l-Da'if* (ed. A.F. Abu Ghuddah, Lahore, 1402/1982), pp. 102-105 for a fuller discussion. Ibn al-Qayyim mentions more than ten clear indications of the forgery of the document, which the Jews repeatedly attempted to use to deceive the Muslims over the centuries, but each time a scholar of Hadith intervened to point out the forgery — such incidents occurred with Ibn Jarir al-Tabari (d. 310), *al-Khatib al-Baghdadi* (d. 463) and Ibn Taimiyyah (d. 728), who spat on the document as it was unfolded from beneath its silken covers.

[83] Suhaib Hasan, *Criticism of Hadith*, pp. 35-44.

[84] The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) allowed such narrations, but they are not to be confirmed nor denied, except for what is confirmed or denied by the Qur'an and Sunnah. See e.g. *An Introduction to the Principles of Tafseer* of Ibn Taimiyyah (trans. M.A. Ansari, Al-Hidaayah, Birmingham, 1414/1993), pp. 56-58.

SECTION C

FURTHER BRANCHES OF *MUSTALAH* AND *RIJAL AL-HADITH*

The above-mentioned classification of ahadith plays a vital role in ascertaining the authenticity of a particular narration. Ibn al-Salah mentions sixty-five terms in his book, of which twenty-three have been discussed above. Two further types not included by Ibn al-Salah, *mu'allaq* and *mutawatir*, have been dealt with from other sources. The remaining forty-two types follow in brief, which help further distinguish between different types of narrations.

1. Knowledge of *I'tibar* ("consideration"), *mutaba'ah* ("follow-up") and *shawahid* ("witnesses").

Traditionists are always in search of strengthening support for a hadith which is reported by one source only; such research is termed *I'tibar*. If a supporting narration is not found for a particular hadith, it is declared as *fard mutlaq* (absolutely singular) or *gharib*. For example, if a hadith is reported through the following isnad: Hammad bin Salamah --- Ayyub --- Ibn Sirin --- Abu Hurairah --- the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم), research would be done to ascertain whether another trustworthy reporter has narrated it from Ayyub; if so, it will be called *mutaba'ah tammah* (full follow-up); if not, a reporter other than Ayyub narrating from Ibn Sirin would be sought: if so, it will be called *mutaba'ah qasirah* (incomplete follow-up).

Whereas *mutaba'ah* applies to the isnad, i.e. other narrations from the same reporters, a narration which supports the text (meaning) of the original hadith, although it may be through a completely different isnad, is called a *shahid* ("witness").[85]

2. *Afrad* (singular narrations).

3. The type of character required in an acceptable reporter.

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[85] Ibid., p. 156.

4. The way a hadith is heard, and the different ways of acquiring ahadith.
5. How a hadith is written, and punctuation marks used.
6. The way a hadith is reported.
7. The manners required in traditionists.
8. The manners required in students of Hadith.
9. Knowledge of a higher or lower isnad (i.e. one with less or more reporters respectively).
10. Knowledge of difficult words.
11. Knowledge of abrogated ahadith.
12. Knowledge of altered words in a text or isnad.
13. Knowledge of contradictory ahadith.
14. Knowledge of additions made to an isnad (i.e. by an inserting the name of an additional reporter).
15. Knowledge of a well-concealed type of *mursal* hadith.
16. Knowledge of the Companions.
17. Knowledge of the Successors.
18. Knowledge of elders reporting from younger reporters.
19. Knowledge of reporters similar in age reporting from each other.
20. Knowledge of brothers and sisters among reporters.
21. Knowledge of fathers reporting from their sons.
22. Knowledge of sons reporting from their fathers.
23. Knowledge of cases where e.g. two reporters report from the same authority, one in his early life and the other in his old age; in such cases the dates of death of the two reporters will be of significance.

24. Knowledge of such authorities from whom only one person reported.
25. Knowledge of such reporters who are known by a number of names and titles.
26. Knowledge of unique names amongst the Companions in particular and the reporters in general.
27. Knowledge of names and by-names (*kunyah*).
28. Knowledge of by-names for reporters known by their names only.
29. Knowledge of nicknames (*alqab*) of the traditionists.
30. Knowledge of *mu'talif* and *mukhtalif* (names written similarly but pronounced differently), e.g. Kuraiz and Kariz (كريز ، كريز).
31. Knowledge of *muttafiq* and *muftariq* (similar names but different identities), e.g. "Hanafi": there are two reporters who are called by this name; one because of his tribe Banu Hanifah; the other because of his attribution to a particular *Madhhab* (school of thought in jurisprudence).
32. Names covering both the previous types.
33. Names looking similar but they differ because of the difference in their father's names, e.g. Yazid bin al-Aswad and al-Aswad bin Yazid.
34. Names attributed to other than their fathers, e.g. Isma'il bin Umayyah; in this case Ummayyah is the mother's name.
35. Knowledge of such titles which have a meaning different from what they seem to be, e.g. Abu Mas'ud *al-Badri*, not because he witnessed the battle of Badr but because he came to live there; Mu'awiyah bin 'Abdul Karim *al-Dall* ("the one going astray"), not because of his beliefs but because he lost his way while travelling to Makkah; and 'Abdullah bin

Muhammad *al-Da'if* ("the weak"), not because of his unreliability in Hadith, but due to a weak physique.

36. Knowledge of ambiguous reporters by finding out their names.
37. Knowledge of the dates of birth and death of repoters.
38. Knowledge of trustworthy and weak reporters.
39. Knowledge of trustworty reporters who became confused in their old age.
40. Knowledge of contemporaries in a certain period.
41. Knowledge of free slaves (*mawali*) amongst the reporters.
42. Knowledge of the homelands and home towns of reporters.[86]

[86] See *Muqaddimah Ibn al-Salah.*

APPENDIX

Verdicts on the ahadith mentioned in the Foreword

1. *Mutawatir*, as declared by many scholars, including Ibn Taimiyyah, al-Suyuti, Najm al-Din al-Iskandari (d. 981) and al-'Ijlouni (d. 1162). About this hadith, al-Daraqutni said, "It is the most authentic one regarding the virtues of any surah." It is related by al-Bukhari, Muslim and others.

2. The following is the *sahih* hadith of al-Bukhar, Muslim, al-Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah and Ibn 'Asakir: "Verily, Allâh has Ninety-Nine Names which if a person safeguards them, he will enter the Garden." In some narrations of this hadith found in al-Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah, al-Hakim and others, the names are listed at the end; however, at least three different listings are given, e.g. one list being, "He is Allâh, besides whom there in no other deity, the Merciful, the Compassionate,…, the Forbearing" while another is "Allâh, the Unique, the Absolute,…, the One who has nothing like unto Him." It is agreed that these latter narrations are *da'if*, and this is why al-Bukhari and Muslim did not include them in their *Sahihs*. Al-Tirmidhi says in his *Sunan*, "This (version of the) hadith is *gharib*; it has been narrated from various routes on the authority of Abu Hurairah, but we do not know of the mention of the Names in the numerous narrations, except this one." Ibn Taimiyyah says, "Al-Walid (one of the narrators of the hadith) related the Names is not from (the saying of) one of his Syrian teachers … specific mention of the Names is not from the words of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم), by the agreement of those familiar with Hadith."[87] Ibn Kathir says in his *Tafsir*, under verse 180 of Surah al-A'raf, that these narrations are *mudraj*. Ibn Hajar takes a similar view in his commentary on *Sahih al-Bukhari*. Various scholars have given different lists of 99 Names from their study of the Qur'an and Sunnah, including Ja'far al-Sadiq, Sufyan bin 'Uyainah, Ibn Hazm, al-Qurtubi, Ibn Hajar and Salih bin 'Uthaimin.

[87] *Fatawa Ibn Taimiyyah*, 6:379-382.

3. Ibn Taimiyyah says, "It is not from the words of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم), and there is no known isnad for it, neither *sahih* nor *da'if*"; al-Zarkashi (d. 794), Ibn Hajar, al-Suyuti and others agreed with him. Al-Qari says, "But its meaning is correct, deduced from the statement of Allâh, **I have not created the Jinn and Mankind, except to worship Me**, i.e. to recognise/know me, as Ibn 'Abbas (رضي الله عنهما) has explained." These statements are mentioned by al-'Ijlouni, who adds, "This saying occurs often in the words of the Sufis, who have relied on it and built upon it some of their principles."[88]

4. Al-'Ijlouni says, "Al-Saghani (d. 650) said: *Maudu'*. I say: But its meaning is correct, even if it is not a hadith." no. 2123. 'Ali al-Qari says, "But its meaning is correct, for al-Dailami has related from Ibn 'Abbas as *marfu'*: 'that Jibril came to me and said: O Muhammad! Were it not for you, the Garden would not have been created, and were it not for you, the Fire would not have been created', and in the narration of Ibn 'Asakir: 'Were it not for you, the world would not have been created'." Al-Albani also quotes al-Saghani's verdict, and comments on al-Qari's words thus, "It is not appropriate to certify the correctness of its meaning without establishing the authenticity of the narration from al-Dailami, which is something I have not found any of the scholars to have addressed. Personally, although I have not come across its isnad, I have no doubt about its weakness; enough of an indication for us is that al-Dailami is alone in reporting it. As for the narration of Ibn 'Asakir, Ibn al-Juzi also related it in a long *marfu'* hadith from Salman and said, 'It is *maudu'*, and al-Suyuti endorsed this in *al-La'ali*."[89]

5. *Sahih* - related by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

6. Al-'Ijlouni says, "Al-Ghazali mentioned it in *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din* with the wording, Allâh says, "Neither My heaven nor My earth could contain Me, but the soft, humble heart of my

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[88] Isma'il bin Muhammad al-'Ijlouni, *Kashf al-Khafa'* (2 vols. In 1, Cairo/Aleppo, N.D.), no. 2016.

[89] Al-Albani, *Silsilah al-Ahadith al-Da'ifah*, no. 282.

believing slave can contain Me." Al-'Iraqi said in his notes on *Al-Ihya'*, "I do not find a basis (i.e. isnad) for it", and al-Suyuti agreed with him, following al-Zarkashi. Al-'Iraqi then said, "But in the hadith of Abu 'Utbah in al-Tabarani there occurs:... the vessels of your Lord are the hearts of His righteous slaves, and the most beloved to Him are the softest and most tender ones." Ibn Taimiyyah said, "It is mentioned in the Israelite traditions, but there is no known isnad from the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) for it." Al-Sakhawi said in *Al-Maqasid*, following his shaykh al-Suyuti in *Al-La'ali*, "There is no known isnad from the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) for it, and its meaning is that his heart can contain belief in Me, love of Me and gnosis of Me. But as for the one who says that Allâh incarnates in the hearts of the people, then he is more of an infidel than the Christians, who specified that to Christ alone. It seems that Ibn Taimiyyah's mention of Israelite tradition refers to what Ahmad has related in *Al-Zuhd* from Wahb bin Munabbih who said that Allâh opened the heavens for Ezekiel until he saw the Throne, so Ezekiel said, 'How Perfect are You! How Mighty are You, O Lord!' So Allâh said, 'Truly, the heavens and the earth were too weak to contain Me, but the soft, humble heart of my believing slave contains Me'." He also quoted from al-Zarkashi's writing that one of the scholars said that it is a false hadith, fabricated by a renegade (from the religion), and that it is most-often quoted by a preacher to the masses, 'Ali bin Wafa, for his own purposes, who says at the time of spiritual rapture and dacne, "Go round the House of your Lord." He further said that al-Tabarani has related from Abu 'Utbah al-Khawlani as *marfu'*, "Truly, Allâh has vessels from amongst the people of the earth, and the vessels of your Lord are the hearts of his reghteous slaves, and the most beloved of them to Him are the softest and most tender ones;" in its isnad is Baqiyyah bin al-Walid, a *mudallis*, but he has clearly stated hearing the[90] hadith."Al-Albani rates this last hadith mentioned as hasan.[91]

[90] *Kashf al-Khafa'*, no. 2256.
[91] Sahih al-Jami' al-Saghir, no. 2163; *Silsilah al-Ahadith al-Sahihah*, no. 1691.

7. Al-Nawawi said, "It is not established." Ibn Taimiyyah said, "*Maudu'*." Al-Sam'ani said, "It is not known as *marfu'*, but it is quoted as a statement of Yahya bin Mu'adh al-Razi." Al-Suyuti endorsed al-Nawawi's words, and also said, "This hadith is not authentic." Al-Fairozabadi said, "It is not a Prophetic statement, although most of the people think it is a hadith, but it is not authentic at all. In fact, it is only related in the Israelite traditions: O Man!! Know yourself: you will know your Lord." Ibn al-Gharas said, after quoting al-Nawawi's verdict, "...but the books of the Sufis, such as Shaykh Muhi al-Din Ibn 'Arabi and others, are filled with it, being quoted like a hadith." Ibn 'Arabi also said, "This hadith, although it is not proved by way of narration, is proved to us by way of *Kashf* ('unveiling', while in a trance)."[92] Regarding this methodology, al-Albani says, "Authenticating ahadith by way of *Kashf* is a wicked innovation of the Sufis, and depending upon it leads to the authentication of false, baseless ahadith... This is because, even at the best of times, *Kashf* is like opinion, which may be right or wrong — and that is if no personal desires enter into it! We ask Allâh to save us from it, and from everything with which He is not pleased."[93]

8. *Sahih*. Related by Malik in *Al-Muwatta'*, al-Shafi'I in *Al-Risalah* (p. 110, Eng. Trans.) and Muslim (1:382; Eng. Trans. 1:272). This was the first of two questions which the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) put to a slave-girl to test her faith, the second one being, "Who am I?" She answered, "Above the heaven" and "You are the Messenger of Allâh" respectively, to which he said, "Free her, for she is believer." Her first answer, which is found in the Qur'an (67:16-17, the word *fi* can mean 'above/on', as in 6:11, 20:71 & 27:8), means that Allâh is above and separate from His creation, not mixed in with it, the erroneous belief which leads to worship of creation.

9. *Maudu'*, as stated by al-Saghani and others. Scholars differ as to whether its meaning is correct or not, in what way,

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[92] *Kashf al-Khafa'*, no. 2532; *Al-Da'ifah*, no. 66.
[93] *Al-Da'ifah*, no. 58.

and to what extent.[94] It is sometimes used to justify divisive, anti-Islamic nationalism and patriotism!

10. *Sahih*. Related by Malik as *mursal/mu 'allaq/balaghat* (depending on choice of terminology), and related twice as *musnad* by al-Hakim. The meaning of the hadith is contained in the Qur'an, in the mention of the Book and Wisdom (2:129, 2:151, 2:231, 3:164, 4:113, 33:34 & 62:2); al-Shafi'I says, "I have heard the most knowledgeable people about the Qur'an say that the Wisdom is the Sunnah" (*Al-Risalah*, Eng. Trans., p. 111).

11. *Sahih*. Related by al-Tairmidhi, Ahmad, Ibn Abi 'Asim, al-Hakim, al-Tabarani, al-Dailami and al-Tahawi.[95] The phrase *Ahl al-Bayt* (members of the house) refers: (i) primarily to the Prophet's wives (رضي الله عنهن), from the clear context of the relevant verse of the Qur'an (33:33), (ii) to 'Ali, Fatimah, Hasan & Husain, from the "hadith of the garment" (of *Sahih Muslim*, Book of the Virtues of the Companions). It is imbalanced and unjust to exclude either of these categories from the hadith.

12. A *sahih* hadith related by Abu Dawud, al-Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah & Ahmad, and well-known amongst the people. The fullest narration is, "Abu Bakr will be in the Garden; 'Umar will be in the Garden; 'Uthman will be in the Garden; 'Ali will be in the Garden; Talhah will be in the Garden; al-Zubair will be in the Garden; 'Abd al-Rahman bin 'Auf will be in the Garden; Sa'd bin Abi Waqqas will be in the Garden; Sa'id bin Zaid will be in the Garden; Abu 'Ubaidah bin al-Jarrah will be in the Garden."

13. Related by Ishaq bin Rahawaih and al-Baihaqi with a *sahih* isnad as a statement of 'Umar. It is also collected by Ibn 'Adi and al-Dailami from Ibn 'Umar as *marfu'*, but in its isnad is 'Isa bin Abdullah, who is weak. However, it is strengthened by another narration of Ibn 'Adi, and also supported by the hadith in the *Sunan* that a man saw in a dream that Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم)

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[94] *Kashf al-Khafa'*, no. 1102; *Al-Da'ifah*, no. 36.
[95] *Al-Sahihah*, no. 1761.

was weighed against Abu Bakr, and was found to be heavier; then Abu Bakr was against everyone else...[96]

14. Related by al-Hakim, al-Tabarani and others. It is also related by al-Tirmidhi with the wording, "I am the House of Wisdom, and 'Ali is its Door". Al-Daraqutni labelled the hadith as *mudtarib*, both in isnad and text; al-Tirmidhi said it is *gharib* and *munkar*; al-Bukhari said that it has no *sahih* narration; Ibn Ma'in said that it is a baseless lie. Similar dismissals of the hadith are reported from Abu Zur'ah, Abu Hatim and Yahya bin Sa'd. Al-Hakim declared the original hadith as *sahih* in isnad, but Ibn al-Jauzi regarded both versions as *maudu'*, and al-Dhahabi agreed with him. Several of the later scholars, including Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani, Ibn Hajar al-Makki and al-Suyuti declared it *hasan* due to its various routes of narration. Al-'Ijlouni says, "... none of this devalues the consensus of the Adherents to the Sunnah from the Companions, the Successors and those after them, that the best of the Companions overall is Abu Bakr, followed by 'Umar...", and quotes this view from Ibn 'Umar and 'Ali himself, as recorded in *Sahih al-Bukhari*.[97] Al-Albani declares the hadith to be *maudu'*.[98]

15. A *da'if* or *maudu'* hadith, as stated by Ahmad bin Hanbal, Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, al-Bazzar and many others. Ibn Hazm states that not only is the isnad unsound, but the hadith cannot be true for two further reasons: (I) the Companions were not infallible, and hence made mistakes, so it would be wrong to say that following any of them leads to guidance (ii) the comparison with the stars is wrong, for not every star guides one through every journey! There is different, authentic comparison with the stars given in *Sahih Muslim*: The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said, "The stars are the custodians of the sky, so when the stars depart, there will come to the sky what is promised for it (i.e. on the Day of

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[96] *Kashf al-Khafa'*, no. 2130.
[97] *Kashf al-Khafa'*, no. 618.
[98] *Da'if al-Jami' al-Saghir*, nos. 1410, 1416.

Judgemt). I am the custodian of my Companions, so when I depart, there will come to my Companions what is promised for them (i.e. great trials and tribulations). My Companions are the custodians for my Ummah, so when my Companions depart, there will come to my Ummah what is promised for it (i.e. schisms, spread of innovations, etc.)." (4:1961, Eng. Trans. IV:1344)

16. No isnad exists for this hadith: al-Subki (d. 756) said, "It is not known to the scholars of Hadith, and I cannot find an isnad for it, whether *sahih*, *da'if*, or *maudu'*." It, along with the previous one, is often used to justify the following two extremes: (I) blind following of the views of men, with no reference to the Qur'an and Sunnah; (ii) conveniently following whichever scholar holds the easist view, or that most agreeable to one's desires, again without reference to the fundamental sources.

17. Numerous narrations of this hadith are found in the collections of Abu Dawud, al-Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah, al-Hakim, Ahmad and others: they vary in being *sahih*, *hasan*, or *da'if*, but the hadith is established. Among those who have authenticated this hadith are al-Tirmidhi, al-Hakim, al-Shatibi, Ibn Taimiyyah, Ibn al-Qayyim, al-Dhahabi, Ibn Kathir, Ibn Hajar and al-'Iraqi. Most narrations mention the splitting-up of the Jews and the Christians into seventy-one or seventy-two sects, all being in the Fire except one, prior to mention of the Muslims dividing even more. In some of the narrations, the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) describes the Saved Sect variously as "the *Jama'ah* (community, congregation, main body)", "the largest body (*al-sawad al-a'zam*)" and "that which follows what I and my Companions are upon." The hadith does not mean that the majority of Muslim will be in the Hellfire, for most of them ("the masses") are not involved in intentional, divisive innovation; further, mention of the Fire does not necessarily imply that the seventy-two sects will remain there forever, or that those sects are disbelievers.

18. Although the *Mahdi* is not mentioned explicitly in the collections of al-Bukhari and Muslim, numerous *sahih* ahadith, which are *mutawatir* in meaning, speak of the coming of the Mahdi, a man named Muhammad bin 'Abdullah and a descendant of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) through Fatimah, who will be the Leader (*Imam*, *Khalifah*) of the Muslims, rule for seven years and fill the world with justice and equity after it had been fulled with tyranny and oppression. He will also fight the *Dajjal* along with Jesus son of Mary. The author, in his *The Concept of the Mahdi among the Ahl al-Sunnah*, has named 37 scholars who collected ahadith about the Mahdi with their own isnads and 69 later scholars who wrote in support of the concept, compared to 8 scholars who rejected the idea.

The ahadith prophesying the *Dajjal* (False Christ), a one-eyed man who will have miraculous powers and will be followed by the Jews, and the retrun of Jesus Christ son of Mary (عليه السلام), who will descend in Damascus and pray behind the Mahdi, kill the *Dajjal* at the gate of Lod in Palestine, break the Cross, kill the Pig, marry and have children and live for forty years before dying a natural death, are *mutawatir* in meaning. They have been collected by al-Bukhari and Muslim, as well as other traditionists.

19. *Mutawatir* in meaning, and collected by al-Bukhari, Muslim and others.

20. *Mutawatir* in meaning, and collected by al-Bukhari, Muslim and others. Mention of the inadmissibility of intercession on the Day of Judgment in the Qur'an, e.g. 2:48, 2: 123, must be understood in the light of other of other verses, e.g. 20:109 and *sahih* ahadith. The reward of seeing Allâh for the believers is referred to in the Qur'an, e.g. 75:22-23 and 83:15. These ahadith and those of the previous two categories were generally rejected by the classical *Mu'tazilah* (Rationalists), as well by those influenced by them today, on one or more of the following bases: (i) they contradict the Qur'an (in their view); (ii)

they contradict Reason (in their view), and (iii) they are *ahad*, not *mutawatir*, and hence not acceptable in matters of belief (a flawed argument). Hence, the scholars who wrote the '*aqidah* (creed) of the *Ahl al-Sunnah* included these concepts in it, to confirm their denial of the wrong ideas of the Mu'tazilah. Other authentic ahadith rejected by the Mu'tazilah are many, and include those describing the Prophet's *Mi'raj* (ascension to the heavens), which are again *mutawatir* in meaning.

21. The hadith with this wording is *da'if*, but is meaning is contained in the hadith of Ibn Majah and al-Nasa'I that a man came to the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) and said, "O Messenger of Allâh! I intend to go on a (military) expedition, but I have come to ask your advice." He said, "Is your mother alive?" He said, "Yes." He said, "Then stay with her, for the Garden is under her feet." This latter hadith is declared to be *sahih* by al-Hakim, al-Dhahabi and al-Mundhiri.[99]

22. A *sahih* hadith, collected by al-Bukhari, Muslim and others.

23. This hadith has many chains of narration of the authority of more than a dozen Companions, including twenty Successors apparently reporting form Anas alone. They are collected by Ibn Majah, al-Bahihaqi, al-Tabarani and others, but all of them are *da'if*, according to Ahmad bin Hanbal, Ishaq bin Rahuwaih, Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, al-Bazzar and others, although some scholars authenticated a few of the chains. Al-Baihaqi said that its text is *mashhur* while its isnad is *da'if*, while al-Hakim and Ibn al-Salah regarded it as a prime example of a *mashhur* hadith which is not *sahih*. However, it is regarded by later sholars of Hadith as having enough chains of narration to be strenghtened to the level of *hasan* or *sahih*, a view which is stated by al-Mizzi, al-'Iraqi, Ibn Hajar, al-Suyuti and al-Albani.[100]

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[99] *Kashf al-Khafa'*, no. 1078; *Al-Da'ifah*, no. 593.

[100] *Kashf al-Khafa'*, no. 1665; *Sahih al-Jami' al-Saghir*, no. 3913-4.

24. This additional statement is found in a few of the (weak) narrations of the previous hadith, and is declared as *maudu'* by Ibn Hibban, Ibn al-Jauzi, al-Sakhawi and al-Albani.[101]

25. Mentioned by al-Manjaniqi is his collection of ahadith of older narrators reporting from younger ones, on the authority of al-Hasan al-Basri. Al-Khatib al-Baghdadi said that it is *maudu'* as a narration from the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم), but that is a statement of al-Hasan al-Basri.[102]

26. Related as *marfu'* by al-Baihaqi with a *da'if* isnad, according to al-'Iraqi. Ibn Hajar said that it is actually a saying of Ibrahim bin Abi 'Ablah, a Successor.[103]

* **NB:** The scholars of Hadith agree that a *da'if* or *maudu'* hadith must not be attributed to the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم), e.g. by saying, "The Prophet said: ...", even if the meaning is considered to be correct or if it is actually the saying of a Muslim scholar, for that would be a way of lying about the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم).

وصلى الله على نبينا محمد ، والحمد لله رب العالمين .

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[101] *Al-Da'ifah*, no. 416; *Da'if al-Jami' al-Saghir*, nos. 1005-6
[102] *Kashf al-Khafa'*, no. 2276.
[103] *Kashf al-Khafa'*, no. 1362.